

GOVERNMENT
OF
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZONING COMMISSION

+ + + + +

PUBLIC HEARING

+ + + + +

THURSDAY

JANUARY 27, 2005

The Public Hearing of Case No. 04-22 by the District of Columbia Zoning Commission convened at 6:30 p.m. in the Office of Zoning Hearing Room at 441 4th Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C., Anthony J. Hood, Vice-Chairperson, presiding.

ZONING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

ANTHONY J. HOOD	Vice-Chairperson
KEVIN HILDEBRAND	Commissioner
GREGORY JEFFRIES	Commissioner
JOHN G. PARSONS	Commissioner

OFFICE OF ZONING STAFF PRESENT:

CLIFFORD MOY	Deputy Secretary
SHARON SCHELLIN	Zoning Specialist

OFFICE OF PLANNING STAFF PRESENT:

ELLEN McCARTHY	Office of Planning
DAVID McGETTIGAN	Office of Planning
CINDY PETKAC	Office of Planning

This transcript contains the complete minutes of the public hearing held on Thursday, January 27, 2005.

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PRELIMINARY MATTERS:

Anthony J. Hood 4

WARD 6

Council Member Sharon Ambrose 7

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Ms. Schellin 9

VOTE ON STANTON PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

TO BECOME A PARTY 13

VOTE ON POTOMAC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION 15

VOTE ON SQUARE 776 16

PUD - ABDO DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Prince 17

Mr. Abdo 21

Mr. Millman 31

Mr. Esocoff 43

OFFICE OF PLANNING

Mr. McGettigan 96

ANC-6C

Mr. Rivera 113

STANTON PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Mr. Edwards 121

Mr. Tallant 126

PROPONENTS

H Street/Main Street - Mr. Dyson 136

Mr. Danaher 138

Mr. Pernell 139

Ms. Southern 144

Mr. Hechinger 147

Mr. Price 148

Ms. Cort 155

Mr. Davis 160

Mr. Layman 162

AGENDA (CONTINUED)

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Mr. Kimber	166
Mr. Davis	168
Mr. Lolly	170
Mr. Sherman	175

OPPONENTS:

RESIDENTS OF SQUARE 776

Mr. McCrea	179
------------------	-----

CLOSING REMARKS

Ms. Prince	199
------------------	-----

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

6:44 p.m.

VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

This is the Public Hearing of the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia for Thursday, January 27th, 2005.

My name is Anthony J. Hood. Joining me this evening are Commissioners Parsons, Hildebrand and Jeffries.

It says we are expecting Anthony Hood, but he is here. I thought that would be humorous.

Notice of today's hearing was published in the D.C. Register on November the 12th, 2004. Copies of today's hearing announcement are available to you and are located to my left in the wall bin near the door.

This hearing will be conducted in accordance with provisions of 11 DCMR 30-22. The order of procedures will be as follows.

I will be amending this evening for the Honorable Council Member Sharon Ambrose, Preliminary Matters, Applicant's Case, Report of the Office of Planning, Report of Other Government Agencies, Report of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6-C,

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1 Organizations and Persons in Support, Organizations
2 and Persons in Opposition.

3 The following time constraints will be
4 maintained in this meeting.

5 The Applicant 45 minutes, organizations 5
6 minutes, individuals 3 minutes.

7 The Commission intends to adhere to the
8 time limits as strictly as possible in order to hear
9 the case in a reasonable period of time. The
10 Commission reserves the right to change the time
11 limits for presentations, if necessary, and no time
12 shall be seeded.

13 All persons appearing before the
14 Commission are to fill out two witness cards. These
15 cards are located to my left on the table near the
16 door. Upon coming forward to speak to the Commission,
17 please give both cards to the reporter sitting to my
18 right.

19 Please be advised that this proceeding is
20 being recorded by a Court Reporter and it is also web
21 cast live. Accordingly, we must ask you to refrain
22 from disruptive noises and actions in the hearing
23 room.

24 When presenting information to the
25 Commission, please turn on and speak into the

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1 microphone, first stating your name and home address.

2 When you are finished speaking, please turn your
3 microphone off, so that your microphone is no longer
4 picking up sound or background noise.

5 The decision of the Commission in this
6 case must be based exclusively on the public record.
7 To avoid any appearance to the contrary, the
8 Commission requests that persons present not engage
9 the members of the Commission in conversation during
10 any recess or at anytime. The staff will be available
11 throughout the hearing to discuss procedural
12 questions.

13 Please turn off all beepers and cell
14 phones at this time, not to disrupt these proceedings.

15 At this time, the Commission will consider
16 any preliminary matters. I'm going to ask the staff
17 to hold on that, but I will move to, would all
18 individuals wishing to testify please rise and take
19 the oath.

20 MS. SCHELLIN: Please raise your right
21 hand.

22 Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the
23 testimony you will give in this evening's proceeding
24 will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
25 truth?

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1 Thank you.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I want to ask the
3 Council Member from Ward 6 if she would come to the
4 table, Honorable Council Member Sharon Ambrose.

5 MS. AMBROSE: Thank you very much,
6 Chairman Hood and members of the Commission for
7 entertaining my early testimony. I do indeed have a
8 PSA meeting to go to, PSA too, so I will be leaving to
9 go there.

10 I can't tell you anymore than I have tried
11 to do in my written statement, which you have copies
12 of, how enthusiastic I am about this project.

13 The Capital Children's Museum has given
14 this community and this city great pleasure for many,
15 many years. The physical plant of that wonderful
16 facility has become really more than the Board of
17 Directors of which I am one, is able to sustain as a
18 children's museum.

19 In order to move the museum to another
20 level and seek to provide better services for the
21 children of the District of Columbia and the region,
22 we have sought and obtained designation as a national
23 children's museum. And it was that designation that
24 allowed us to begin to dream about finding another use
25 for that wonderful property and moving the children's

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1 museum to another more appropriate place. And we have
2 found that other use.

3 I am very pleased that Jim Abdo and his
4 firm is going to be able to take on the formidable
5 task of bringing that building up to code, up to speed
6 as it were, so that it will be a useful part of the
7 built environment in this community and also be able
8 to, I believe, by bringing additional folks to the
9 community in the residential units that they're
10 intending to build, jump start the revitalization of
11 what is now H Street, Main Street, the entire H Street
12 corridor.

13 So, I am very, very pleased about that.

14 I am pleased that it is Jim Abdo and his
15 company. He has done other projects in Ward 6 and in
16 other parts of the city that have shown him to be
17 sensitive, not only to the community, but to the built
18 environment of the community in which he works. And
19 that sensitivity has already been evident in his
20 dealings with this community.

21 Abdo Development has, despite the fact
22 that we do not have an inclusionary zoning law, but
23 are just beginning to look at one, Jim Abdo has
24 volunteered to set aside a number of units as
25 affordable in this new development.

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1 So, I just think it is a win/win for the
2 children's museum and the museum and children's
3 communities in the District of Columbia and for the
4 community of Near Northeast.

5 So, I urge you to approve this project,
6 because I think it will really benefit that community,
7 the city and the region.

8 Thank you very much for hearing me this
9 evening.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Thank
11 you, Council Member, if you can hold your seat for a
12 second.

13 Any questions, Commissioners?

14 It's always good to see you and to hear
15 your testimony. Thank you very much.

16 MS. AMBROSE: Thank you.

17 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me go back.

18 Ms. Schellin, do we have any preliminary
19 matters?

20 MS. SCHELLIN: Just two. The first one
21 just to let you know that the Applicant has filed the
22 maintenance affidavit and they did comply with the
23 regs.

24 And the second thing is just that there
25 are three party status requests.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

2 Commissioners we have three requests. I
3 would like to start off with Exhibit Number 23 from
4 the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association.

5 First, let me ask Mr. Thomas or Ms.
6 Prince. Do you have a problem with Stanton Park
7 Neighborhood Association?

8 MS. PARKER: No objection.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: What about the ANC?
10 Who is representing the ANC? I think it's 6-C.

11 Commissioner, if you could come to the
12 table.

13 Now, let me ask one question. Who is
14 speaking for the ANC just in this preliminary -- Mr.
15 Rivera, are you the chairperson? Oh, he's speaking.
16 Okay.

17 MS. SCHELLIN: Excuse me. They need to
18 turn their mike on.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, I'm sorry.

20 Mr. Rivera, do you have any problem with
21 Stanton park Neighborhood Association being a party?

22 MR. RIVERA: I really -- well, we weren't
23 informed that they were involved and a party to the
24 situation.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Well, they've

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1 asked -- they have a request in front of us to be a
2 party. ANC is automatically a party, so that's not an
3 issue.

4 Just to let you know, you already have
5 party status. It's up to my colleagues, we're going
6 to dialogue and see whether or not we think Stanton
7 Park meets the requirements to be a party status.
8 That's the extent.

9 MR. RIVERA: Yes. You can make the
10 decision.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, thank you. Okay.

12 MS. PRINCE: Chairman Hood.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes.

14 MS. PRINCE: One comment. The ANC filed
15 two written reports in this case. In neither case did
16 the ANC authorize a spokesman on behalf of the ANC.
17 Therefore, I believe, the written reports need to
18 stand and individual ANC commissioners who appear
19 before you tonight, will be speaking as individual
20 persons, rather than representatives of the ANC by the
21 terms of the resolutions that were filed by the ANC.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I understand, Ms.
23 Prince, but when we get there, I'm going to look at --
24 there is one that was just handed to us shortly. So,
25 I want to look at that one and see and then we'll make

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1 that determination. So, thank you for your
2 clarification.

3 Okay. Commissioners, Mr. Rivera, I'll
4 probably like to get with you after we go through our
5 proceeding and I'll see if you have preliminary, I'll
6 call you up later.

7 MR. PERNELL: I'm not asking for party
8 too. Well, it is in the boundary of Near Northeast,
9 but I have no opposition against that and being party
10 to.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, okay. Thank you.
12 Stanton Park Neighborhood Association
13 Commissioners, I think that they represent in totality
14 a neighborhood group. I think they meet the request,
15 but I'm open for --

16 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I would concur.
17 They did not, however, indicate whether they are a
18 proponent or opponent of this project.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I believe we know now
20 they are a proponent.

21 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Thank you.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: And I think that was
23 a submittal that came in later too, so --

24 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I didn't see that.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes. Unfortunately,

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1 we got that kind of late too.

2 MS. SCHELLIN: Actually, they didn't
3 submit. I called and --

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, that's how we
5 found out.

6 MS. SCHELLIN: -- spoke with them and they
7 are a proponent.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. So, I move
9 that the Stanton Park Neighborhood Association become
10 a party in Zoning Commission Case 04-22.

11 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Seconded.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD:

13 It's moved and properly seconded. All
14 those in favor?

15 (AYES)

16 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any opposition? So
17 ordered. Staff, would you record the vote?

18 MS. SCHELLIN: The staff would record the
19 vote, four to zero to one to approve Stanton Park
20 Neighborhood Association as granted party status in
21 Case No. 04-22.

22 Commissioner Hood moving, Commissioner
23 Parsons seconding, Commissioners Hildebrand and
24 Jeffries in favor. Commissioner Mitten not present,
25 not voting.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: The next request we
2 have is from the Potomac Development Corporation who
3 is also a proponent.

4 In my review of the submittal, colleagues,
5 they are asking not to even testify. They just want
6 to make sure that they have one specific concern and I
7 think that's dealing with the garage be brought up.
8 But I will -- I am not in favor of promoting -- of not
9 approving them party status. I believe that they will
10 have ample time when we allow for groups to come up,
11 the Potomac Development Corporation will be able to
12 speak at that time. I and I think that would be
13 appropriate.

14 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I agree.

15 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I'd agree too.
16 If they're not even here, I don't know how they
17 could --

18 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Are they here? Yes.
19 They're present, but I think they will have ample
20 time at that time to speak and give us their -- one
21 person will have five minutes and everyone else will
22 have three like the normal procedures.

23 So, I would move that we deny Potomac
24 Development Corporation party status and ask for a
25 second.

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1 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Second.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: All those in favor?

3 (AYES)

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Opposed? So, would
5 the staff record the vote?

6 MS. SCHELLIN: Staff would record the
7 vote, four to zero to one to deny party status to
8 Potomac Development Corporation. Commissioner Hood
9 moving, Commissioner Hildebrand seconding,
10 Commissioners Jeffries and Parsons in favor.
11 Commissioner Mitten not present, not voting.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Also, we have the
13 last request is the residents and property owners of
14 Square 776. Again, they actually did not meet the
15 filing requirements or meet the requirements of
16 3022.3. I would be in favor of denying them party
17 status and also let them know if they are listening
18 that they will have an opportune time to come down
19 when the opponents come and be able to express to us
20 their opposition.

21 Any other comments? Anymore discussion?

22 I would move that we deny the residents
23 and property owners of Square 776 party status for not
24 meeting the Zoning Commission requirements of 3022.3
25 and ask for a second.

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1 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Second.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: It's been moved and
3 properly seconded. All those in favor?

4 (AYES)

5 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any opposition? So
6 ordered. Staff, would you record the vote?

7 MS. SCHELLIN: The staff would record the
8 vote, four to zero to one to deny party status to the
9 residents and property owners of Square 776.

10 Commissioner Hood moving, Commissioner
11 Parsons seconding, Commissioners Jeffries and
12 Hildebrand in favor. Commissioner Mitten not present,
13 not voting.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Now, as soon
15 as I figure out. I guess the ANC, Commissioner
16 Pernell and I'm sorry, Commissioner Rivera. Turn your
17 mike on.

18 MR. RIVERA: Rivera. Anthony Rivera.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Anthony Rivera.
20 Okay. Anthony Rivera.

21 Okay. If we could clear a little space.
22 We're going to have the Applicant come up and present
23 the case.

24 Ms. Prince, I think you all have asked
25 for -- I'm not sure. How much time have you asked

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1 for?

2 MS. PRINCE: 45 minutes.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: 45 minutes.

4 MS. PRINCE: Good morning, Chairman,
5 afternoon, evening.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: It feels like that
7 sometimes, doesn't it?

8 MS. PRINCE: And I was going to say
9 Chairman Mitten. Chairman Hood and members of the
10 Commission.

11 I'm Allison Prince of Shaw Pittman and I'm
12 here tonight as counsel for the PUD Applicant, Abdo
13 Development. I'm here tonight with Paul Tummins, also
14 of Shaw Pittman.

15 We are here to present a project that will
16 be a catalyst for the revitalization of the H Street
17 Corridor and the surrounding area. It is not often
18 that this Commission is presented with an exclusively
19 residential project on a commercially zoned site that
20 is located in the immediate proximity of several
21 office building, in this case, the SEC Headquarters
22 building which is now under construction.

23 This two-acre site was formally the home
24 of the Capital children's Museum, as you heard from
25 Council Member Ambrose. And it has a long history of

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1 institutional use.

2 The zoning of the site is split between
3 the C-3A and C-3B zones districts. It could be
4 developed as a matter of right as an office building,
5 containing approximately 300,00 feet of gross floor
6 area.

7 Instead, the Applicant is proposing 420 to
8 445 housing units in new construction and 47 to 51
9 units in a former convent building that dates back to
10 1870.

11 There will be no office use on the site
12 and there will be no retail to compete with the H
13 Street businesses and instead a critical mass of new
14 residents to patronize those businesses.

15 It would be hard to imagine a project that
16 is more consistent with the housing goals for the
17 District of Columbia. The site if flanked by two
18 metro stations, the newly opened New York Avenue
19 station and obviously Union Station.

20 The project specifically and directly
21 carries out the objectives of the H Street Plan. That
22 plan endorses housing at a higher density with
23 architecture that appropriately marks the entrance to
24 the H Street community. It notes the proximity of the
25 western end of the corridor to the two metro station I

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1 mentioned. And it promotes the increase in the
2 opportunities for new residential and mixed-use
3 development and the adaptive reuse of existing
4 buildings.

5 The plan specifically encourages the
6 redevelopment of this very site with rehabilitation of
7 the existing buildings and additional residential
8 development in the remainder of the Square.

9 Finally, the plan recognizes the gateway
10 location of the site, resulting in an extremely
11 important and highly visible project.

12 In connection with this PUD, the Applicant
13 is seeking a zone change to C-3-C. That zone change
14 is needed to allow design flexibility necessary to
15 create a project that fully respects the existing
16 architecturally significant buildings. It maintains a
17 lot occupancy of only 65 percent.

18 I should note that the project utilizes
19 only a portion of the density available under the
20 requested zoning. While a maximum FAR of an 8 is
21 permitted under a C-3-C PUD, this project involves an
22 FAR of only 5.7.

23 Under the existing zoning, a significantly
24 greater lot occupancy would be permitted.
25 Specifically, a blended lot occupancy of almost 87

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percent would be permitted as a matter of right on the site under the existing combination of zone districts.

This site is ideally appropriate for development through the PUD process. The zone changes requested is to maximize residential opportunities and design flexibility. The project has been designed to the highest standards and reflects extensive community input.

The project amenities will be elaborated upon by Mr. Abdo.

If the Commission has no questions, I would like to proceed with the testimony of our first witness, James Abdo, or Abdo Development. Mr. Abdo will be followed by -- and also Toby Millman of Abdo will add points during his presentation.

He will be followed by Phil Esocoff of Esocoff and Associates Architects. And finally, Martin J. Wells, the Traffic Engineer, is available to present his report or answer questions, if there are any from the Commission.

VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: We'll wait and ask all of our questions at the end.

MS. PRINCE: To the whole panel at the end?

VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Right.

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1 MS. PRINCE: Thank you.

2 MR. ABDO: Test. It works great.

3 Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Members of the
4 Commission. I hope you don't mind if I stand. I'm
5 one of these people that's so fired up about tonight
6 that I don't think I can do this sitting down. So, I
7 hope this isn't going to bother you.

8 I very much, first of all, appreciate you
9 having us here tonight. I had a thought that I just
10 want to share with you that came to me as I was coming
11 over here.

12 We were all driving over together and
13 everybody is talking about this big Super Bowl game
14 that's coming up and they're talking about these two
15 great teams that have worked really hard for this
16 entire season and that they're coming together.
17 They're going to be in this big show on a week from
18 Sunday, the Super Bowl. And I'm sitting there quietly
19 overhearing this and I thought to myself as I walking
20 up here. You know, I'm on a great team too. And I've
21 been on a great team now for over a year. And when I
22 talk about my great team, it's not just members of my
23 company, it's great. It's only attorneys. It's
24 wonderful talented architects. It's a great nonprofit
25 with the Capital Children's Museum, now the National

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1 children's Museum. It's the members of the H Street
2 community. It's Commissioner Pernell and other ANC
3 Commissioners that work together with me and with my
4 company for almost a year now, as a team. And I can
5 tell you wholeheartedly that the Super Bowl for us is
6 not a week from Sunday. It's right now. It's tonight
7 standing before you. That's how seriously we are
8 taking this and that's how much this means to us.

9 I can also tell you as a member of this
10 team that I believe wholeheartedly that what we are
11 bringing you is a winner. And I thank you again for
12 having us.

13 I also want to talk to you more
14 specifically about our various team members. We are
15 the Applicant, Abdo Development, along with our
16 friends at the Capital Children's Museum, who are here
17 this evening. Architects for the historic large
18 building, the old children's museum, will be Abdo
19 Development. Jamie Lee is our in-house architect.
20 We're doing that all in-house.

21 On the new construction, the newer
22 building, talented Phil Esocoff and his great team
23 will be the architects of record and David Bell, who
24 is a local architect who many of you may know. He
25 sits on the D.C. Preservation League Board along with

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1 myself. He will be working on the amenity building
2 that we'll show you that's part of that. That's also
3 140-year old building that we will be preserving.

4 Several engineers, Bowman, Traffic
5 Consultant Wells. Ms. Wells is here. We've got the
6 landscape architects, I believe, here as well in case
7 you have other questions and you already have been
8 introduced to our land-use council.

9 I think it's important for you to know who
10 we are. We've been before HPRB any number of times,
11 but we've never been before your group. And I just
12 want you to know a little bit about my company.

13 We're based in the District of Columbia.
14 We always have been and I can assure you that we
15 always will be. Eighty percent of my company's
16 employees, including myself, are D.C. residents and
17 we're very proud of that. We build almost exclusively
18 in the District of Columbia. We've completed over 30
19 projects in the District. Only one project we've done
20 outside of the District. The first one is actually
21 happening this year.

22 We are sort of known as the group that led
23 the revitalization of the 14th Street Corridor, which
24 by the way when we went there was not the fashionable
25 place that it is now. It was very much like H Street

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1 is today.

2 We specialize in preservation, restoration
3 and the conversion of historic buildings. We're
4 passionate about it and you'll see that in some of the
5 examples we're going to bring you.

6 We have experience in developing new
7 buildings that are sensitive to the existing
8 neighborhood and its context. We have an excellent
9 record of local, small disadvantaged business
10 enterprise participation. LSDBE participation is a
11 cornerstone for us. And we're going to show you
12 examples of how we have outperformed in that area.

13 We are adamant about hiring within the
14 community. And you'll see that as well later in the
15 presentation. And one thing that is important to note
16 is that we add significant value to the neighborhoods
17 that we come to, not just for existing property owners
18 that are there that can see their values rise
19 significantly. But value that's involved in all these
20 other things, be it preservation, be it jobs. There's
21 a whole lot of ways that we assess value.

22 I'm going to show you some examples that
23 you may or may not be familiar with of work that we've
24 done. This is a building that used to be the old
25 Cadillac hotel on Logan Circle. We went to Logan

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1 Circle really before anybody else would, this was a
2 building that was vacant and abandoned for many years.

3 When we were finished with it, that's what it looks
4 like and that's what it looks like today.

5 We won the historic preservation
6 millennium award by the Logan Circle Community
7 Association for the work that we did on this
8 structure. The interiors were in very distressed
9 conditions when we took the building over, but today
10 this is what they look like.

11 Moving on, we take on challenging sites.
12 Very difficult in-fill projects around the city.

13 The building at the left here is a
14 building that I purchased six years ago. It was a
15 boarded up crack house between 16th Street and 15th
16 Street. This is on P Street, NW. When I purchased
17 that building, I brought my banker over to see it. We
18 had just finished a project at Logan Circle. He said,
19 Jim, when are you doing the next project? We want to
20 see the next project. I picked him up in my pick-up
21 truck and I drove him over. And I'm driving down P
22 Street and all of a sudden I cross 16th Street and he
23 starts kind of shifting and getting nervous. He says,
24 where are you taking me? And I pulled up in front of
25 this building and it was boarded up and shuttered at

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1 the time, covered with graffiti and I said, this is
2 the next project. This is the project that I want to
3 do next. And he said, no. You're crazy. We don't
4 lend money east of 16th Street.

5 So, what did I do? I did it myself. I
6 mortgaged my home. I got the money together. I
7 bought this property anyhow and I financed all of the
8 construction on my own. It ended up being an enormous
9 success.

10 During the period that we were developing
11 that property, we used to park our pick-up trucks and
12 construction vehicles right where these cars are
13 parked right now. And one day I got this very irate
14 phone call from a gentleman who said. I'm a lawyer
15 and I represent the owner of the lot that you're
16 parking your vehicles on. And I said, I am so sorry.

17 I didn't realize that that was a lot. I thought it
18 was an alley that connected this street to a rear
19 alley. But once I found out it was a lot, I said. I
20 want to meet your guy and I want to buy it. And
21 that's what we did.

22 And what we created was a building. It's
23 brand new, but fit in very well to the historic
24 context of the neighborhood. A building that we're
25 very, very proud of and we took area here that was a

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1 real thorn under the saddle for the community.

2 This is a place where prostitution took
3 place. This is a place where drug dealing took place.

4 This was a very scary block of P Street. Now, it's
5 one of the more fashionable places in the city to
6 live. And this is what the building looks like from
7 the inside.

8 I knew that we were very successful with
9 this building when the week we finished it, a
10 gentleman from the neighborhood walked up to me and he
11 said, you know, Mr. Abdo, I sure like what you did
12 with that old building. And I said we just built this
13 building. It wasn't even here. But I new we were
14 successful when he said that.

15 Moving on, this is a building where we
16 went further. Further into a transitional area. This
17 is 13th and N Street. Again, long before anyone else
18 was over there. This building was off the power grid
19 for 25 years. When I bought this building, I called
20 Pepco up and I said, hey. I just bought this
21 building. I need some temporary power because I need
22 to get started on this thing.

23 And Pepco, I heard them clicking away in
24 the background on their computer and they kept saying,
25 give me that address again. Give me that address.

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1 And I did and they said, I'm sorry, there is no such
2 building. We have no record that any building exists
3 there. It took me two days to get Pepco with an
4 engineer to come out here and physically acknowledge
5 that that building existed, because it had been off
6 the power grid that long.

7 When we were done with that building, we
8 fully restored it and built some very dramatic living
9 space with direct elevator entrances directly in them.

10 As a result of our work there, HTTV did a
11 special on this building and on our company for our
12 positive impact on the community and what it meant to
13 that community.

14 We've done super scale larger projects.
15 This is a 70,000 foot square foot building on Rhode
16 Island Avenue. Again vacate. By the way, I want to
17 make sure you understand that everything we do
18 involves vacant structures. We don't throw people out
19 of buildings to build new apartments and new condos.
20 These are all vacant structures that we go into and
21 create housing. Re-establish housing. Distressed
22 interiors, and this is the level of build-out that we
23 do. This is a project that you're probably very
24 familiar with. Many of you were probably involved in
25 this. This is the Bryan Square PUD that Toby Millman

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1 brought to you when he was with Akin Young and Tal.
2 He then brought this building to me and said, Jim.
3 You're the right guy for this building. This is a
4 100-year old schoolhouse. It was in severely
5 distressed condition. And when we were done with this
6 building, that's what it looks like today.

7 People told me I was crazy. You're nuts,
8 Jim, to put that kind of money into an address at 13th
9 and Independence Avenue, SE.

10 Well, we have a prominent member of the
11 Senate living in this building, two Congressmen, and a
12 major general and his wife from the U.S. Air Force who
13 are responsible for protecting the air space over
14 Washington, D.C. Those are the kind of people that
15 recognized quality, rehabilitation and adapted for use
16 and have joined in going into these neighborhoods.
17 And we're very proud of that.

18 By the way, we won the mayor's award for
19 excellence in historic preservation for that building.

20 We also know retail. We understand
21 distressed retail. And we're willing to take chances
22 there as well. We brought the first pharmacy to Logan
23 Circle since 1940. The community said we want a place
24 to gather. We want a place where we can meet our
25 friends. We brought Caribou Coffee, the second

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1 largest coffee retailer in America to the corner of
2 14th and Rhode Island Avenue. And took distressed
3 outdoor space and made it a place where people could
4 sit and meet their friends.

5 We had a husband and wife from the Logan
6 Circle neighborhood that said, you know, we're
7 accountants but what we really want to do is open a
8 hardware store. And the community was asking for
9 that. We built for them the first hardware store
10 that's been open in Logan Circle in 75 years. They're
11 so successful, they're opening a second one in the
12 district.

13 Well, we don't just put our money where
14 our mouths are. We actually put ourselves in these
15 blocks. You're looking at our corporate offices right
16 here. Our corporate offices were in this building.
17 This was a vacant and abandoned crack house. We then
18 re-established this building, put in a new family-
19 owned retailer downstairs and took our corporate
20 offices upstairs.

21 We are in the process of moving again to
22 this distressed building at the corner of 14th and
23 Rhode Island. It was burned down after the riots
24 after the death of Martin Luther King. So, we plan on
25 being in the very communities that we help drive.

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1 I want to turn now -- that's us. That's
2 who we are.

3 I want to turn now to the Capital
4 Children's Museum and the PUD.

5 One of the very first things that we did
6 when we were chosen by the Capital Children's Museum
7 to be the developers for this site was start community
8 outreach. And we think there's two levels of
9 community outreach. There's honest community outreach
10 and then there's just going through the motions.

11 We made it a point just like we always
12 have to never posture with any of the people within
13 the community. We have been honest and transparent
14 from day one. We've never gone in once, not once,
15 asking for more than what we needed, hoping that there
16 would be some fallback position that we could be happy
17 with. That's not the way we operate. We've been very
18 honest with the community and we appreciate their
19 input. And as a result of their input, as a result of
20 being inclusive in the process, we truly have a better
21 project to present to you.

22 We have reasons for why these certain
23 meetings are highlighted. I want to let Toby Millman
24 tell you about that.

25 MR. MILLMAN: I think there's actually two

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1 of these slides showing all 28 meetings that we had
2 with the community. I think the important thing to
3 recognize with this beyond just the sheer number of
4 meetings that we had since the summer on this project
5 was the process that we undertook.

6 Very early on in the process, we
7 identified the key organizations. The ANC was the
8 first group that we met with back in June. Before we
9 even had a plan we met with them to ask them, what do
10 you want on the site? What kind of a project are you
11 looking for?

12 We met with the Capital Hill Restoration
13 Society twice. We met with the Historic Preservation
14 Division. We met with individual residents who called
15 us and said we're interested in finding out more about
16 this project. Is it okay if we come over and meet
17 with you? We always welcome people to come over to
18 our office. We always met with people independently.

19 After we went through this sort of series
20 of initial meetings with the community, Sharon Ambrose
21 hosted a public meeting, a publicly noticed meeting at
22 the Children's Museum. We didn't have an actual
23 count, but the estimates are that there were probably
24 about a 100 or more people at that meeting. And at
25 that point, that was the first time we unveiled after

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1 the initial community input our initial plans for the
2 site and we solicited input. That was back in August.

3 We continued to meet with important
4 groups. We even met with the Little Sisters of the
5 Poor, the original owners of the building. Some of
6 them still living had lived in the building when they
7 left in the 1970's, to get their feedback.

8 Of course, the Zoning Commission set-down
9 hearing was on September 30th. So, you can see how
10 much we had already met with the community, even
11 before the set-down.

12 Then we met again with the ANC6-C. The
13 red meetings were meetings that were all publicly
14 noticed meetings. They were ANC meetings or public
15 meetings.

16 Again, met with the full ANC in October.
17 We met with the Near Northeast Citizens. You may have
18 read in the paper the Art-O-Matic event that we had,
19 which was open to the public. Over 40,000 people came
20 in to view locally produced art. That was completely
21 hosted by Abdo Development in the museum building.

22 We continued to meet with the ANC. On
23 December 1st, the Planning and Zoning Committee
24 recommended approval. We met with Stanton Park
25 Neighborhood Association. He's here tonight. And

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1 then on December 8th, the ANC voted unanimously to
2 support the project.

3 We continued to meet. Follow-up meetings
4 with Capital Restoration Site. We even took Little
5 Sisters of the Poor on a site tour. And then ANC6-C
6 had voted again on a supplemental motion.

7 So, again, just wanted to demonstrate the
8 process we went through with this community and where
9 we are today.

10 MR. ABDO: Thank you. We're going to move
11 on now getting into the project. Just want to orient
12 you to where we are, of course. This is the project
13 site. This is the H Street bridge.

14 Again, we're zooming in a bit closer.
15 This is a lot of the commercial development that's
16 around us and we'll keep going in and fill you in more
17 on that as we go. This is a lot that's directly
18 across the street from us that has recently sold.
19 And, again, that's just a vacant lot.

20 These are some row houses that exist at
21 3rd and I Street. This is the vacant gas station
22 that's our neighbor across the street from us. This
23 is Stewart Petroleum and BP Amoco, something that we
24 along with the balance of the community really want
25 to see something happen with. And we believe that our

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1 project will make that happen.

2 Again, commercial development all the way
3 along I Street. These are offices that are happening
4 all the way along I Street opposite us. Same thing
5 along 2nd Street. Commercial development, Railway
6 Express building. All offices. More offices. Bigger
7 offices. SEC Building that you're all very familiar
8 with, diagonally right across the street from our
9 site.

10 This is what we're dealing with. This is
11 our building. This is our site. This is the level of
12 retail that is existing on the main retail corridor
13 across the street from us right now. Again,
14 diagonally across the street. This is the retail that
15 we have right near our site. And, again, not all
16 unlike 14th Street when we first came over there.

17 Fragmented retail, boarded up buildings,
18 distressed buildings, and I'm saying this with all due
19 respect to the H Street, Main Street, because they are
20 working their tails off to make this happen. But they
21 will tell you tonight what I'm telling you. And that
22 is, it's housing that's going to drive and change this
23 retail condition of H Street.

24 Now, we'll go in and talk about what we
25 are going to preserve as preservationists. What's

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1 outlined in blue is the portions of the Capital
2 Children's Museum that are truly historic. But the
3 way the building was originally built 140 years ago,
4 that is what we intend to preserve and focus on.

5 As well as the amenities building that we
6 talked to you about and this is a true amenity to the
7 site, because this entire building we are preserving
8 and we're giving it as an amenity use to the entire
9 square.

10 These are portions of the building that we
11 will be removing. These are non-compatible additions
12 that have been added in the 1950s and '60s. They
13 happen along 3rd Street. They happen along H Street
14 right up against the bridge, an old auditorium. They
15 happen also along H Street where they filled in the
16 building. They put this sort of veneer on the
17 building. If you drive by the building it's very flat
18 all the way along H Street, not the way it was
19 originally intended, but they needed more space. So,
20 they filled those areas in and you can see the change
21 of the brick. We're going to peel all that off and
22 allow this building to sort of resurrect itself to its
23 original grandeur.

24 With all due respect to my friends at the
25 Capital Children's Museum, this is a massive

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1 undertaking. They're a nonprofit. They've been
2 running this building for 30 years. It is in
3 difficult shape and it needs some help and that's what
4 we intend to do.

5 And these are some of the existing
6 conditions that we've got before us right now.

7 Again, the amenities building that we will
8 completely restore and program into our site and we're
9 going to show you very shortly how we're doing that.

10 This is a slide that I find very
11 disturbing. I call it -- what did I call it today?
12 Darth Vader. Let's put Darth Vader up.

13 When we analyzed this site, we looked at
14 this by saying, you know what? What is we don't get a
15 PUD? But we need to maximize what we can do on this
16 site. What would it look like? Let's study it. And
17 I'm telling you. I couldn't wait to throw this in the
18 trash can when I saw it. It's horrendous.

19 You know, this is by right. This is the
20 lot coverage that we're allowed to do. It completely
21 encapsulates the site. It completely walls off the
22 entire community. It doesn't respect the historic
23 structure one bit. And this is not what we want to
24 do. This is why we're before you.

25 What we want to do is this. This is what

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1 we want to program on this site. This is what we've
2 been working for in the last year with the community
3 to accomplish. This is a site, and this is a slide
4 we'll have to stay on for a little bit. It respects
5 the integrity of the historic structure. There's a
6 30-foot setback all the way around this. There is
7 open transparency that the neighborhood is welcoming
8 to the neighborhood.

9 Allison Prince talked to you about the lot
10 coverage. I there were what, 65 percent under this
11 plan. We're butt up against this H Street bridge.
12 So, what have we done? We've come up with a way to
13 have the front door of our property take place on I
14 Street. And to utilize this historic building in the
15 center of the site as an amenities building, where you
16 would come in and a cab would drop you off at the
17 circular entry point and you'd come in and be greeted
18 by a concierge who would direct you to one of the
19 three buildings.

20 We're going to maintain this as a very
21 limited vehicular access all into the site. These are
22 cobblestones and fountains and tremendous amounts of
23 trees and planting taking place all through here. If
24 it's a driving rainstorm and you're coming back from
25 the airport in a cab, you'd be allowed to come back in

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1 here to drop off -- drop someone off that lives in
2 this building. But that would be a controlled access
3 point that's controlled by the concierge.

4 Other things we listened to. One of the
5 first things the community said to us. We want your
6 parking entrance on 2nd Street. DDOT said that.
7 Other people said that and we said, you know what? We
8 agree with you. Second Street is a commercial
9 corridor. We have got this dark zone of our site
10 that's right up against the underpass of the H Street
11 bridge.

12 What did we do? We talked with Philip
13 Esocoff. Came up with a design that has all of our --
14 all of our parking happening right in this dark
15 corner, including, you know, moving and move out
16 loading zone. All of that is happening down here, not
17 impacting the surrounding streets.

18 We also listened to OP and DDOT about
19 connecting to the H Street bridge. We studied the H
20 Street plan and saw that they want that bridge to
21 become absorbed by buildings. You know, whether it's
22 the SEC or potentially acreage over the railroad
23 tracks. Look, we're on board for that. We're making
24 direct connections to the H Street bridge. We want
25 that bridge to become more pedestrian friendly.

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1 We are committing ourselves to make
2 connections here. We're studying additional
3 connections even to the historic building to make the
4 H Street bridge not be such an obstacle to H Street
5 anymore. And we're very much committed to that.

6 We're committed to plantings all around
7 the entire site to green and soften this site. We're
8 committed to greenery on the roof and, you know,
9 environmental sensitive water retention systems that
10 Phil will talk to you about and green roof systems.
11 All of these things are part of our programming and
12 design for the site.

13 This is our parking garage. Let's talk
14 about parking. You've heard about the number of units
15 that we have. Zoning requires us to have a minimum of
16 one parking space for every four units. We're
17 building 520 parking spaces for 480 units. We're over
18 one to one parking. We heard the community. We heard
19 their concerns. They don't want to all of a sudden
20 all the parking on the street to be taken up, so we
21 have built a parking amenity here that satisfies more
22 than one to one.

23 And let's not forget this is a smart
24 growth structure. We're right between two major Metro
25 stops. People don't even have to own a car to move

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1 into this building. You will also note that we've
2 created a parking accommodation that does not impinge
3 on or require us to worry about even underpinning a
4 lot of these historic structure.

5 Let's walk around the building. This is
6 3rd Street. This is our elevation from 3rd Street and
7 we'll keep moving.

8 This is our new entrance to the building.

9 This is, again, if you go up here to the map at the
10 top. This is what we talked about. This is the front
11 door to our square now and you can see how we've used
12 this amenities building to be the welcome center, to
13 be the place that you come to where we'll have a
14 conference room facility. Potentially, you know,
15 community meetings can take place there. That's what
16 we're doing here.

17 Also note this park here in the front.
18 This is 5,000 square feet of private property that we
19 are creating as public park space with fountains and
20 trees and anyone in the community can access that 24
21 hours a day.

22 This is our elevation along 2nd Street,
23 the all commercial corridor. Again, here's what we've
24 done. These people are standing on the H Street
25 bridge. This is that dark underpass that takes place

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1 right there. This is where Phil has very well placed
2 the parking garage entrances that the community has
3 asked for.

4 H Street. This is how we looked from H
5 Street. You can see how the bridge impacts our
6 building. Why we're not putting retail in this 160-
7 year old building? We want to bring residents to
8 support the retail that's already down on H Street.
9 All housing. That's the program.

10 Now, we're showing you some prospectus of
11 how this looks from 3rd Street. How this building
12 looks in conjunction with the historic structure and
13 with what we anticipate will be the massing through
14 zoning of the site across the street from us.

15 We're just going to start walking down
16 Street and experiencing 3rd Street. And we're going
17 to keep going.

18 And this is the pedestrian experience of
19 3rd Street. What does it look like today? What does
20 it look like for the owners of these row houses today
21 on 3rd Street? That's what it looks like. What will
22 it look like when we're done? That's what it will
23 look like.

24 What will that do for the owners of those
25 houses and their property values? And just living

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1 across from something that's green, that's soft,
2 that's alive.

3 I'm going to let Phil very quickly now
4 talk to you about his approach to the new buildings
5 and then I have some follow-up statements at the end.

6 MR. ESOCOFF: Good evening. Esocoff and
7 Associates we've been in business nine years. I've
8 been practicing in Washington I hate to say for over
9 25 years now. And the city I have come to actually
10 adore as a home and this is the place where we've
11 raised our child. And both my wife and I are
12 architects and we've lived in a high-rise condominium
13 in D.C. on Connecticut avenue that entire time. So,
14 we're quite aware of what it's like living in a
15 condominium, living downtown and what the quality and
16 characteristics of a building are that make it a great
17 home.

18 We also know what those buildings
19 contribute to the city living in an historic building
20 on Connecticut Avenue. And my goal is to produce
21 buildings that are as good as those buildings,
22 buildings that will be worthy of restoration, not
23 renovation and that will be attractive for years to
24 come.

25 The first slide you saw was Florida and

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Massachusetts Avenue recently completed. This is sort of, as I think of it, as a nexus between downtown Washington on the grid and ceremonial Federal Washington. This is Mass Avenue. There's the city museum. Chinatown Arch is down there. And this building is sort of on the -- there is sort of a place mark as you come down to make the transition as H Street kind of wiggles its way across Mass Avenue.

This is also Massachusetts Avenue. 1499 Mass. Those properties -- it has two carriage levels of apartments and then a roof top, a recreation space, a swimming pool and you'll see that later.

And probably our most ambitious project, the Jefferson at Penn Quarter, Square 457-C. It incorporates 13 historic properties. The new home for Willie Mammoth Theater, 250 seats plus a 10,000 square foot component for theater programs that they do with children. And a grocery store. 500 underground parking spaces and over an acre of rooftop gardening courtyard.

A building that I did before starting my office is also on Pennsylvania Avenue just west of Washington Circle, 2401 Penn. This is one of the more interesting mixed-use projects in town. It's retail. Three floors of office and then four floors of

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1 residents. Been very well received.

2 Going back to what Jim was showing you.
3 Our building has taken its cues from some of the other
4 buildings we've had, so I wanted to try to illustrate
5 what our design has and then show you some built
6 examples of the very types of things we'll doing here.

7 The set-back terrace as you can see is a way to
8 soften and make a nice transition between the 65 foot
9 building here and these different levels of 80 -- of
10 90, 100 and 110 with these trellises and I'll explain
11 more about those. Next.

12 You see these trellises actually connect
13 the piers. They provide shade for people on the roof
14 but they also incorporate toilet, kitchen and dryer
15 exhausts so that we don't have penetrations through
16 the exterior of our buildings producing a better
17 complexion for our buildings.

18 And that's what we did on this building up
19 on Connecticut. So, these are actually exhaust
20 chimneys, which is sort of a contemporary chimney.
21 And the fans are actually above trellis and the
22 trellis provides an armature for growing plants up
23 there and we have automatic watering systems for those
24 plants.

25 And it produces, of course, a very

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1 interesting skyline, much more reminiscent of the
2 traditional buildings like the one I live in and the
3 ones around Connecticut and Kalorama elsewhere in the
4 city.

5 Going back to the site plan. The central
6 essential space here is -- a lot of that is on deck,
7 but it can be well planted and use unit pavers. Next.

8 This is a space of similar proportion but,
9 of course, our space at the Children's Museum will be
10 much more open on either end. The same orientation.

11 So, sun pours in through here. This dimension across
12 -- behind the Odd Fellows building is only 65 feet.
13 Our space between our two buildings is about 75 feet.

14 And once again it's open on either end.

15 This is all -- this area back here,
16 loading dock that serves both the grocery store, which
17 is under this grass and beneath the feet of the person
18 taking this photograph is Willie Mammoth's new
19 theater, also under grass. All the surface comes off
20 an alley.

21 We like to make connections between the
22 interior main lobbies of our buildings through to
23 these courtyards in the center. Though the city does
24 have an Alleys Act that prevents people from having
25 addresses on alleys, apartment buildings that came

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1 after that actually have lots of people living on
2 alleys.

3 And so our thought is that the interior
4 courts of buildings and alleys -- exposure of
5 buildings need to be very carefully considered as much
6 as exteriors to streets because it's what people's
7 lives are made out of.

8 This is the roof plan of our building,
9 which actually you have a lot more grass and green
10 space on this. And a pool. This is the west tower.
11 And this is an example of what all these little sort
12 of enclosures and wind screens do. I tell people
13 you'll be comfortable up on this roof and feel like
14 they're really in a garden. Once again, a view out.
15 There's a plane going into National Airport, swimming
16 pool.

17 And this is a view to the west. It makes
18 some small nice areas for people to sit in.

19 And so I wanted to blend this into
20 questions of what are the sort of quantitative
21 objective criteria that I would submit constitute
22 architectural merit. Too often architects have allows
23 architectural merit to fall into just the realm of
24 what architects would call delight and ignore the
25 aspects of architecture that would be termed commodity

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1 or firmness.

2 And, in fact, those are the two things
3 that actually support the delight and actually justify
4 it economically. And so it's nice to have a trellis,
5 but it's hard to justify a trellis unless you're using
6 it for something else, which are these exhaust flues
7 that are enclosed in this peer, so the people on the
8 roof aren't listening to fans or smelling odors from
9 inside the building. But then that helps support
10 providing something that's very functional, which is
11 the shading that you need if you've ever been on a
12 roof in Washington, other than maybe in October or
13 May.

14 And can you go back now for just a second.

15 So, this provides wind screening, private
16 areas so that people on a roof can feel like they're
17 in a sheltered more intimate space. These are
18 communal so it's nice to be able to have a small area
19 you can reserve. Next.

20 This is by contract is what I would
21 consider, I don't know if you would call it lacking in
22 merit, but I wouldn't consider it architectural merit.

23 Exposed mechanical equipment, a lack of coordination
24 between true wall and mechanical. That's a gas flue.

25 This toilet, kitchen, dryer exhaust if all those are

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1 exhausted hopefully. And that a through wall air to
2 air conditioning unit that is probably the least
3 effective efficient mechanical system you can put into
4 a building. This is under-developed and, of course,
5 oriented to the north.

6 Going back to the street again. Let's
7 focus now on the bottom.

8 This is how we developed the base of the
9 building. We worked on a way to create units at the
10 grade level that can be directly accessed from the
11 street. So, we've created these -- you know, I have
12 to admit architecture is a copying art and living and
13 working on opposite sides of Dupont Circle, I cross
14 that area for the last 25 years and I really used that
15 as a place to find answers to questions I can't solve.

16 So, you'll notice a lot of the details of ornamental
17 beam here, the small projecting balconies. These are
18 patterned brick, different colors of brick. Precast
19 trim work, ornamental iron work. These are just
20 things that I've learned by copying fellow architects.

21 We found modern ways to do that. These
22 are sort of -- this is an ornamental pattern grill
23 that we did for the Jefferson. It integrates some of
24 the floral elements. Wheat and corn. Things that
25 Jefferson as an agronomist experimented with down in

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1 Monticello, so we had someone in our office work on
2 this. It's not something that people learn much n
3 architecture school, but they learn in our
4 architecture school.

5 We know that by bringing windows into --
6 doubling up window that we can create a better sense
7 of scale that is urbane and more like 19th century
8 buildings which had 11 and 12 foot ceilings.

9 This is an example, once again, of 400
10 where we used double height windows. To our
11 inspections, we used pre-cast trim. You'll notice our
12 pre-cast heads and sills actually are let into the
13 sides, into the brick work so that they actually do
14 function as sills.

15 We put a steel shelf angle, which usually
16 sits under those in many projects. We actually sit
17 above it so that you don't look under and think of it
18 as a fiction.

19 We also project ourselves to shed water.
20 We get custom color mortar. Multiple colors of brick
21 and we worked very hard to achieve that same little
22 sense of solidity that the historic buildings in town
23 do.

24 By contrast, this is the adjoining
25 building. Ashen colored pre-cast. Once again flues

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1 flowing heating exhaust right into public space.
2 Someone's bedroom directly at grade. These are not
3 the kinds of things that lead to a good public realm.

4 They lead to broken shades and dentist offices and
5 crumpled papers stuck between the glass and the
6 Venetian blind.

7 And I really can't say that emphatically
8 enough. I really -- I really want the Zoning
9 Commission not to think that it's a matter of opinion
10 when people say something has architectural merit.
11 And isn't my opinion just as good as yours. The truth
12 is that architects go to school for five, seven, eight
13 years. They apprentice for three years. They practice
14 for many years to understand these things. And to
15 dispel it as though it's just a matter of taste really
16 is undermining to the profession, but also undermines
17 the city, because I think people have to understand
18 that, in fact, light and shadow do work differently
19 when windows are recessed and when they're not. When
20 water runs down a surface of a brick building, it will
21 etch the glass or it won't, depending upon the way
22 it's detailed. And that building will deteriorate and
23 look shmootzy. It won't patinate.

24 And I think people have to be
25 discriminating about that and be connoisseurs of good

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1 solid construction. Sorry, John, for that rant. But
2 I don't like to see other architects get away with it.
3 And don't like good architects not getting credit for
4 it either.

5 Here is something that's terms a cornice,
6 but it's really just a concrete projection. These
7 concrete slab, it is actually a poor form of
8 construction. It will weather poorly. They are used
9 to hold up those two floors of brick. They transfer
10 heat right through the slab into that unit, thereby
11 creating a thermal bridge. These windows are far too
12 shallow and probably a lower STC and R values than
13 buildings we have and, therefore, the glass looks wavy
14 and cheap.

15 By comparison, we actually dressed up the
16 top of our building. These required scuppers are done
17 in copper and carefully positioned as sort of a
18 secondary rhythm, once again, pre-cast ornament that
19 is ribbed to catch the sunlight in very specific ways.

20 Here are the sills. This is sort of a
21 modern take that led into the sides. We analyzed the
22 percentage actually, if you'll go back for one second.

23 We have two minutes, 55 seconds.

24 Tinted mortar with V-strut joints.
25 Ornaments once again here. Next.

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1 And here once again. Here's the alley
2 back there behind these buildings and we feel that all
3 these people live on this alley. It's not just people
4 that live on the street that have to have a nice view.

5 Why don't we raise the property values by making the
6 alleys nice places to live too. They're nice quiet
7 courts.

8 That interior court you saw at the
9 Jefferson is essentially an alley, but it's more than
10 half the units face that. So, why would we not want
11 to embellish that and make it beautiful if only for
12 our neighbors, let alone ourselves?

13 Thank you.

14 MR. ABDO: Thank you, Phil.

15 I think you can understand why we feel
16 very confident that we've selected the right attorney
17 and that we are going to bring something of extreme
18 quality to the H Street corridor.

19 I might run over just a tiny bit. I do
20 really want to wrap this up and talk to you very
21 quickly about our project amenities and our public
22 benefits. Again, this is just a refresher here. We
23 are committed to bringing new owner residents to the H
24 Street corridor. Not an office building, not an
25 apartment building. Apartment owners don't really

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1 care about their neighborhoods that much. New
2 resident owners do. They have a vested interest and a
3 stake in their neighborhood and they will see to it
4 that services and things like that change on the H
5 Street corridor. That's why we think new owners are
6 so important.

7 We know that from our experience on the
8 14th Street corridor that it's housing that turned it
9 around, not the offices on K Street that were steps
10 away. It wasn't apartment buildings, super-scale
11 apartment buildings that were there. None of that
12 contributed to the revitalization of 14th Street. It
13 was new owner residents that did that. And that's why
14 we need the critical mass of new owner residents at
15 this Gateway project.

16 Affordable housing. We are bringing the
17 largest on-site affordable housing component in the
18 history of Washington, D.C. through the PUD process to
19 this site. We're not doing that by just a little bit.
20 We're essentially tripling the next closest one that's
21 out there. This is a lot of affordable housing.

22 And by the way, you know, when we told the
23 community we're bringing almost 20,000 square feet of
24 affordable housing, 19,852 to be exact, those aren't
25 fuzzy math numbers. We're not talking about, oh,

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1 yeah. We still have to carve out corridors and shafts
2 and stairwells. That's net. That's net affordable
3 housing that will result in about 26 affordable
4 housing units. And we're very proud of that.

5 This is a Smart Growth project. A lot of
6 people use that term loosely. Not here. This is
7 right over top of one of the largest, probably most
8 efficient, transportation hubs in the east coast.
9 Union Station. And in my opinion, it's been
10 completely under-utilized when it comes to housing.

11 And now we have yet another Metro stop
12 right on our doorstep with the new New York Avenue.
13 And we're right between that.

14 Historic preservation. You always know
15 how passionate I am about that. You've seen the work
16 that we do. I sit on the D.C. Preservation League.
17 We're going to treat these buildings in the right way
18 and we're going to do the right thing by them.

19 Superior urban design you've heard from
20 Philip Esocoff. We are certain that that's what he's
21 going to bring to this project.

22 Improve street scape. We've already shown
23 you that and we're willing to talk more bout it with
24 our landscape architect.

25 Environmental benefits. Again, green roof

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1 systems, storm water retention, water filtration
2 systems, low-e glass systems. High energy efficient
3 heating systems. All of these things, including our
4 smart growth element will contribute as environmental
5 benefits.

6 Financial contribution to H Street, Main
7 Street and affordable parking fund. And I want to
8 hold on this for just a minute.

9 We are -- I was on the founding board of
10 the 14th and U Main Street and I know how hard it is
11 to get a Main Street off the ground. It is a bear.
12 It's very difficult and one of the biggest problems is
13 trying to get money together. So, one of the first
14 things that I said, we brought them in and we sat down
15 and talked to them. And said, we are making a
16 financial contribution to you. The day we get our
17 building permit, you're getting cash from us. And
18 that will continue to happen.

19 This other item here, affordable parking
20 fund. There were certain individuals within the ANC,
21 certain ANC commissioners that brought up a very valid
22 point to us. They said, Jim. You know, you're doing
23 great things with affordable housing, but what about
24 affordable parking? What if people who have
25 affordable housing need parking?

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1 Well, you know, we really hadn't thought
2 about that, but we did. We sat down and talked to
3 them. We came back to the ANC and we put together a
4 \$40,000 affordable parking fund. This is a fund that
5 we're funding that will be distributed by DHCD or
6 whatever agency distributes the affordable housing.
7 And they'll do that in the form of grants to help
8 individuals who might be on the cusp and just might
9 not quite be able to afford to purchase parking to get
10 grants. And that's what we've done to help solve that
11 problem.

12 But I want to be clear about something
13 right here. We are committed to affordable housing,
14 not necessarily affordable parking. We think their
15 issue is legitimate, but we want to encourage people
16 to have home ownership, not necessarily automobile
17 ownership. This is a Smart Growth project that can
18 allow people to move in and spend more on their homes
19 and not even necessarily have a car.

20 We're committed to LSDBE participation so
21 much that on the project that we did, which was a PUD
22 that you all approved for the Bryan Square, we had a
23 LSDBE requirement there of 35 percent. We achieved 50
24 percent over and above that requirement for that that
25 project.

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1 We provided apprenticeship programs as
2 part of that. We are so committed to LBDBE
3 participation that Mark Turner, one of project
4 managers here with us tonight is -- we are building an
5 LSDBE incubator building over on 1301 8th Street, NE.

6 It's a warehouse structure that we are going to
7 encourage small businesses to come in and take
8 possession of and set up their firms here and register
9 as LSDBE's so they can participate with us on H
10 Street.

11 Jobs for the neighborhood and D.C.
12 residents. I cannot speak more strongly about that
13 and how committed we are to it. I think one of the
14 best ways to do that for you and this will be the end
15 of my talk tonight, is to illustrate it.

16 And one of the best ways to do that for me
17 is to introduce you to someone who I am extremely
18 proud and quite frankly that I admire. This is a
19 gentleman named Theo Turner.

20 He came to me years ago when we were
21 rehabing an abandoned crack house just off the corner
22 of 14th and Rhode Island that I wanted to be our
23 corporate headquarters. And he walked into our job
24 site. I'll never forget this. And he just walked up
25 to me and he said, Mr. Abdo, I live on the streets in

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1 this neighborhood and I've been watching you and I've
2 been watching what you're doing. And I want to be a
3 part of it. I need a job. And I said, great. That's
4 great. We want you to be a part of it and you've got
5 a job. And I introduced him to Ken Bice, our senior
6 site superintendent. I said, Ken. This is Theo
7 Turner. He's working for us.

8 We got him set up. Got him ready to go
9 and he worked that very day.

10 This last December we celebrated our five-
11 year anniversary with Theo as a member of our team.
12 Five years he's been with us. He lives now in an
13 apartment that we own that Abdo Development provides
14 for him. He has a savings account. He is more
15 optimistic about the future than anyone I know. And
16 he cares very much about his neighborhood. That is
17 part of successful development. That's what we're
18 about.

19 And look. You know, this isn't just a
20 warm fuzzy story and lip service. We don't just have
21 one Theo Turner in our company. We have many. We
22 have many people within our company that are Hispanic,
23 that are Asian, that are African American, that are
24 African that come from the neighborhoods that we go
25 into and work in. And many of them have stores very

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1 similar to Theo Turner's and we're very, very proud of
2 all of them.

3 And I can tell you that that is the spirit
4 and the intent and the level of opportunity that we
5 intend to bring to H Street, but we need your help to
6 make that possible. We're ready to do it. The
7 community is ready to do it. And we're passionate
8 about it. And we respectfully and humbly appreciate
9 your support.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. PRINCE: We have Marty Wells, the
12 Traffic Engineer here only if there are questions. In
13 addition, we have the landscape architect and one
14 minor housekeeping matter. Although Phil's been
15 qualified as an expert by this Commission before, I
16 neglected to ask you to qualify him tonight if you
17 feel that's necessary again. And the same is the case
18 with Marty. He's been qualified as an expert by this
19 Commission before. Their resumes were submitted in
20 advance.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I am familiar.
22 Okay. I'm familiar with Mr. Wells, but Phil. I'm
23 sorry, his last name?

24 MS. PRINCE: This guy. Phil Esocoff.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Esocoff. Okay.

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1 Okay.

2 Any problems, gentlemen? Any questions?
3 No problem. Qualify them both as experts. I think
4 they both have before as you previously stated.

5 Are you finished?

6 MS. PRINCE: We've completed our direct
7 presentation.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I was wondering. I'm
9 going to ask my colleagues.

10 Should we hear a brief -- something brief
11 from Mr. Wells and Mr. Esocoff?

12 I'm sorry, we heard from mr. Esocoff. Mr.
13 Wells, and your landscape -- you can tell I know very
14 little about architecture. That's why, if you ever
15 notice, I don't say a whole lot. But I do sometime.

16 Do we need to hear from -- okay. If you
17 have questions, you just ask. I want to make sure
18 we're all fine up here. That's all. Okay. Okay.
19 We'll proceed without questions.

20 Thank you.

21 I know Mr. Wells is looking for an
22 opportunity to come up and -- any questions?

23 No questions. Commissioner Hildebrand.

24 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I'm sorry. I
25 forgot to turn my mike on. Is that better?

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1 First off I do admire the work you're
2 doing on this project. I think it's -- it stands to
3 be a huge benefit to the community.

4 But I am concerned a bit about the height
5 that we're attaining with this new structure.

6 When you were doing your development
7 scenarios, did you ever look at maximizing the C-3-B
8 category instead of going for these three, C-3-C?

9 MS. PRINCE: When we were studying the
10 site, it was critically important to have C-3-C zoning
11 because of the 110 foot height that it afforded. With
12 that height, we were able to achieve the lot occupancy
13 that created that generous buffer around the historic
14 buildings. And that is why we sought the C-3-C
15 zoning.

16 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: So, you couldn't
17 achieve the same thing with C-3-B and just cut out two
18 floors of height?

19 MS. PRINCE: It's a critical balancing act
20 as always. To achieve the density that was absolutely
21 essential to this project, yet protect the integrity
22 of the historic building, we needed a buffer zone, put
23 we needed to create the density on pads that required
24 a height of that level. Although I should add that
25 there is stepping on the 3rd Street side of the

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1 building as Phil explained in great detail.

2 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Could you go
3 into the elements that make it absolutely essential?

4 MS. PRINCE: I really don't want to
5 testify here, so I'm going to turn it over to either
6 Phil or Jim to -- Jim is the developer to explain --

7 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Sure.

8 MS. PRINCE: -- the need to achieve the
9 density.

10 MR. ABDO: It's a -- I mean without trying
11 to get into a tremendous amount of economics, there's
12 a balance that you need to strike to be able to make a
13 project like this work. And, you know, if we were to
14 take on a by-right development, we could pretty much
15 get -- cram all the airfare that we really needed to
16 make these numbers work without going to the height.

17 But the project itself was unacceptable.
18 It just was -- it was terrible. And so we recognized
19 that we needed to pull away from that historic
20 building. We needed to give it room to breathe. We
21 needed to be respectful of it.

22 We also looked at what was around us. We
23 looked at the SSC's structure. We looked at other
24 buildings of significant height. We talked with the
25 Office of Planning. We talked with various people

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1 within the community. And it was really a collective
2 effort that got us to this design, to this mass and it
3 made sense. It works. And that's how we arrived at
4 it.

5 We listened to concerns that people had
6 when it did come up about height, particularly -- the
7 only concern that we had heard ever was just on the
8 corner of 3rd, opposite the row houses. So, we sat
9 down and met with the community. We came up with new
10 designs. We came up with shadow studies. We stepped
11 that area back to mitigate those concerns. And we
12 have not had those concerns come to us.

13 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Okay. In
14 looking at your new elevation, I'm a little concerned
15 about the height of the alternating chimneys. I guess
16 I'm looking at your 3rd Street elevation now and the
17 chimneys appear to be on the building that faces 2nd
18 Street. They are significantly taller than the rest
19 and to my eye they look a bit disproportional. And I
20 think if you could continue to perhaps look at some
21 improvements there, that could be warranted.

22 MR. ESOCOFF: Certainly happy to do that.

23 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I may have some
24 other questions, but if someone else wants to step in.

25 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Just a question

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1 about some of the adjacent buildings and heights. The
2 SEC Building. How far will that be from the site and
3 then -- do you know the height of that building?

4 MR. ABDO: That's at 115 feet and the SEC
5 will come all the way to and abut up and connect to
6 the H Street bridge right here.

7 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. So, if
8 we're traveling along H Street moving east, you know,
9 starting around the Hopscotch Bridge, that overall
10 area. I mean, you see a lot of height and bulk and so
11 forth there, but as you start to travel east, you
12 know, everything sort of drops in scale.

13 Would you say that?

14 MR. ABDO: Along the H Street corridor?

15 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes.

16 MR. ABDO: Yes. I would.

17 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. ABDO: I want to also note, however,
19 that, you know, the massive historic structure that
20 lines H Street, it's really our presence up against
21 that bridge, is 70 feet or so at its highest. So, we
22 are fairly consistent with the rhythm that takes place
23 further down the street. And we are very consistent
24 with what sort of is a bookend here with the SEC
25 structure.

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1 MR. ESOCOFF: Okay. I wanted to add one
2 other point too. Is that, you know, we've measured
3 our project from I Street, not -- we're not using H
4 Street bridge at all. But the H Street bridge is
5 almost 12 feet higher here and maybe another 10 feet
6 higher here. So, that the building from this street
7 isn't going to even appear as a 110 foot building.
8 We're lucky if coming up the bridge you'll see it as a
9 marker to start there. But our building is only that
10 one small part and then heads back.

11 And I saw this also as an opportunity in
12 terms of people coming and going from Washington when
13 they come into town on the Metro from Boston and New
14 York to see Washington as this growing community with
15 attractive buildings flanking this area and sort of on
16 the move as opposed to just office buildings that a
17 substantial residential building was a very positive
18 image for the city to present to the millions of
19 people coming in by rail every day.

20 MR. ABDO: I want to also add that with
21 the air rights that are contemplated here with the
22 acreage site that we will expect again to have some
23 significant height and massing there that will be very
24 consistent and this will actually work and serve as
25 sort of a transition as you come down the bridge and

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1 enter the H Street corridor.

2 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: That's the word I
3 was trying to get you to say. Transition.

4 MR. ABDO: Thank you.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Do you have
6 another question for Mr. Abdo?

7 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Yes. I do.

8 What is driving the symmetry of the
9 elevation on I Street. I guess it would be the north
10 elevation. Why do those two towers have to be
11 identical in height? Would there be any consideration
12 of stepping down the tower on the left to make what
13 you're calling a transition from the higher zone to
14 the lower?

15 MR. ESOCOFF: Well, I mean we were looking
16 at it also coming from the other direction, that
17 there's a transition when you're coming in the other
18 direction from here that, you know, there's a five or
19 six story building -- for a building World Vision over
20 here. There's going to be 65-foot building here.
21 This is 65 feet. So, it's going from 65 to 90 to 110.

22 And you know, we see this as sort of a tower to mark
23 that corner. And, you know, these are two commercial
24 structures.

25 I also point out that in the shadow

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1 studies that we did when we set these back, you know,
2 the worst part of the year, the shadow that, one, our
3 shadows actually fall across the intersection very
4 dramatically to the north and they don't affect the
5 townhouses. It's the 65-foot building here that
6 actually starts to cast shadows on the other building.

7 And I guess I keep going back when I think
8 about heights to the 1910 Height Act, which I assume
9 presupposes that if you had an empty site like Mount
10 Vernon Triangle, that based on the, you know, planning
11 theory of the L'Enfant plan and the McMillian
12 Commission and the 1910 Height Act, that Washington
13 can be a beautiful city with buildings that are about
14 20 feet taller than the width of the street, that
15 that's considered a reasonable height for buildings
16 and not -- and allows neighbors sufficient light and
17 air to have a pleasant environment.

18 So, I know some people are concerned about
19 that, but when I looked at some of those townhouses,
20 in fact, where shadows could even fall on them, they
21 already have porch to shade their windows. So, it's
22 sort of a shadow on another shadow.

23 So, you know, sometimes I think there's a
24 fear of things that we analyze in the commuter that
25 seem unfounded, though I can understand people being

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1 concerned about it.

2 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Right. Yes.
3 When snow doesn't melt on the street anymore because
4 it doesn't see sunlight in the winter, that's a
5 concern.

6 But I particularly like your animated roof
7 tops on some of your other buildings. I've always
8 admired them. But one of my concerns here, of course,
9 is that we're going to the maximum possible height and
10 then we're exceeding that height by another story with
11 what becomes a fairly substantial screen above the
12 roof line.

13 Could you comment on that and why you feel
14 that's appropriate?

15 MR. ESOCOFF: Yes. Actually having been
16 married in one of those extensions, on 2311
17 Connecticut Avenue, I actually have great affection
18 for these small intimate areas that have the sky as a
19 roof and have windows to show you views out from that
20 like the Villa Savoy.

21 And I think that those structures up on
22 the roof not only make the roof a much more beautiful
23 garden environment, but it also would allow people on
24 the street to project a sense of inhabitation to the
25 roof. And so when they look up there, they understand

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1 that I see that's an occupied space. It's a garden.
2 Wouldn't that be nice? It's a way people can project
3 humanity into buildings and imagine what it might be
4 like in the copula, the dome of the Capitol. Or that
5 there might be people meeting under there.

6 I think it goes back to K Street and the
7 fact that the buildings are so unremittingly in
8 general ugly, that we assume that the only good
9 building is a shorter building. And then looking up
10 in the sky and seeing a building and seeing it extend
11 like a steeple, that someone that can't be bad because
12 there is so much bad architecture in town here.

13 But I think the challenge is to make that
14 so beautiful that you, in fact, want to focus on that.

15 And have people think, well, that's a lovely thing.
16 What a great city to live in.

17 So, when you come across the town coming
18 south on Connecticut and you see the Woodward, which
19 is where we live and you see that copula, I don't
20 think, gee, that's blocking the sky. What a shadow
21 that might be casting. I think, well, look at the
22 Chinese embassy. Why isn't it as nice as the
23 Woodward?

24 And when you look at the cathedral off in
25 the distance, hundreds of feet high, you don't think.

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1 Gee, why isn't it more like the Russian embassy that
2 we see from our roof, a square block of utilitarian
3 space as low as it can get. Right? Well, I guess
4 that sort of sums up my position.

5 We want to make these things beautiful
6 extensions like you would see Gaudi have or, you know,
7 I mean, that's one of our favorite architects.

8 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Right. It's
9 just the concern is that they don't become so
10 monolithic that they essentially become an extra
11 story.

12 MR. ESOCOFF: Right. Well, these are very
13 transparent. You know, if you see what we've done. I
14 mean, I think, coming down Mass Avenue and looking at
15 the top of 1499, you can actually see through the
16 trellises or 2401 Penn I think people see up there and
17 they see, you know, the stars and, you know, the flags
18 and then they see the chimneys and the perforated
19 metal beams.

20 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Let's go to a
21 more mundane question.

22 MR. ESOCOFF: Okay. I'm hoping people
23 will get married on the roofs of these buildings.

24 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: With the loading
25 facility in one remote corner of the project, if I'm

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1 moving in to the building that's on the northeast
2 corner, where do I offload my furniture and how do I
3 get it from the loading dock to my house?

4 MR. ABDO: Phil, I'll start and then you
5 can continue.

6 MR. ESOCOFF: Okay.

7 MR. ABDO: If you want to go to the
8 parking plan if you want to, if you can. Okay. Well,
9 that's fine.

10 You unload there. I mean, they are at the
11 loading -- Phil has designed all the loading docks in
12 response to the community there in that location and
13 the building is designed such that all the functions
14 and the ability to move that stuff within those
15 buildings happens from that point. And you can
16 explain that.

17 MR. ESOCOFF: Right. On the lower level
18 we actually have a path that allows people to come
19 over and use the other elevator core. In fact, the
20 trash goes to the lower levels of the garage as they
21 do in other buildings. And they have these little
22 tractors and they can actually pull trash all the way
23 from here through the garage and then inside over to
24 the loading dock. And it will be an inconvenience to
25 people moving in, but it will be a requirement.

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1 And also since this isn't a rental, the
2 amount of move-ins and move-outs will be less and so I
3 think that will work.

4 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Yes. I think
5 that's -- I think people will find that a substantial
6 inconvenience.

7 Is that a utility corridor that connects
8 from the loading dock to the other elevators, so that
9 you're not actually walking by people's entrances to
10 their homes as you're moving your furniture down the
11 corridor?

12 MR. ESOCOFF: No. They can move through
13 the lower level of the garage.

14 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: It's through the
15 garage?

16 MR. ESOCOFF: Right.

17 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Do you have a
18 plan of that you could --

19 MR. ESOCOFF: Well, we have the garage
20 plan and the loading dock plan.

21 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: If you could
22 give me a reference please?

23 I remember seeing the loading dock plan
24 but I saw a corridor that's kind of it that kind of
25 had a continuation line and then abruptly changed to a

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1 residential floor plan.

2 MS. SCHELLIN: We need the mikes on
3 please.

4 MR. ESOCOFF: Right. What we were showing
5 there was actually the entry at the bridge level. The
6 next plan, the garage plan actually shows the loading
7 dock which is actually lower than that.

8 MS. PRINCE: Commissioner Hildebrand, if
9 you look in the small reduced 8 ? by 11 package, it's
10 on page 18.

11 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: This one? Okay.
12 Hold on for just a moment. Yes. I see.

13 So, if I unload in this location, I
14 actually cart my furniture through the garage to get
15 to the other elevators?

16 MR. ESOCOFF: I think the movers would do
17 that.

18 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I can't afford a
19 mover. But so that corridor that is shown there that
20 just starts and then ends in the garage --

21 MR. ESOCOFF: That actually goes up to the
22 other level, a breakaway section.

23 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: That's at the
24 residential level.

25 MR. ESOCOFF: Right.

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1 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Okay. And the
2 same would be true -- what about for the historic
3 property. How would they move furniture?

4 MR. ESOCOFF: Do you see where that piece
5 of sort of brown area of the loading dock?

6 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Yes.

7 MR. ESOCOFF: They can actually --

8 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Is that a tie-in
9 there?

10 MR. ESOCOFF: Yes. That's a tie-in. They
11 can go into the other building underneath the stairway
12 that leads from the H Street bridge, which don't
13 forget is 10 feet. It sort of forms a roof to that
14 and then the stairs go down.

15 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Okay.

16 MR. ESOCOFF: It's complicated and it's
17 not ultimately convenient, but I've gone around town
18 and seen too many big open loading docks.

19 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Oh, trust me. I
20 don't like open loading docks either, but --

21 MR. ESOCOFF: Right.

22 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: -- it might be
23 beneficial if there was some way to get a loading
24 facility closer to the other elevator.

25 Actually, I think that was all I had.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me go straight to
2 Mr. Esocoff, architect.

3 I wanted to ask you. You expounded about
4 merit and architects going school and it's more than
5 just an opinion. I actually wish I had that in
6 writing. But anyway, if you could just give me a
7 condensed version. I would like to hear that again.

8 It's actually -- it's actually other
9 things I would like to hear. I've never heard that
10 expressed in that manner.

11 MR. ESOCOFF: Right. Well --

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: So, if my colleagues
13 would indulge me.

14 MR. ESOCOFF: Well, let's go back 2,000
15 years to Vertruvious. It's a Roman -- to find
16 architecture --

17 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: But remember I asked
18 for the condensed --

19 MR. ESOCOFF: This is a short bridge.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I asked for the
21 condensed version.

22 MR. ESOCOFF: Yes. And then we'll

23 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Condensed. Very
24 condensed.

25 MR. ESOCOFF: Right. He just said that --

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1 the point is that was he hit it on the head with those
2 three things, that there's delight in architecture,
3 there's commodity, which is really just accommodating
4 what it's supposed to be for, it's useful purpose.

5 And there was firmness, which is the
6 architect show what an architect is supposed to now,
7 which is how you build a building to last. Not just
8 that it lasts until they take the architectural photo,
9 but to actually last well beyond the yellowing of the
10 pages of that architecture magazine.

11 And, in fact, I would even go so far as to
12 say a building that would actually get better
13 overtime, like a fine wine. Because, for instance, we
14 did a building on Connecticut Avenue next to the
15 National Trust in limestone. That building looked
16 better five years after it was done than the first
17 year, because the limestone had mellowed and gotten a
18 little weathered, just like breaking in a leather
19 jacket. It had gotten better with age.

20 So, one the failings of the American
21 Institute of Architects is that they don't allow you
22 to enter a building for an award after it's been --
23 after it's been open five years. In fact, they should
24 restrict it, that you can't enter a building for an
25 award until it's five years old.

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1 To prove that, in fact, as a piece of
2 construction, you'd know what you were doing.

3 There's one thing to do with sculpture
4 that people then use as building, but then it starts
5 to fall apart. That's not actually architecture.
6 That's architectural. It may be a comment in
7 architecture, but it's not actually architecture.

8 The buildings we love like the Cathedral,
9 actually get better as they get dirty, because they
10 patinate. In other words, they get a patina like
11 copper gets green. And so that's one characteristic
12 of architecture is that it sheds water. It keeps
13 people warm in the winter. It doesn't use an undue
14 amount of energy.

15 That, you know, you can lay out furniture.
16 That actually is part of what makes good
17 architecture, that it lasts, that it's really superb
18 at its function and then there a transcended aspect of
19 it, not to get too philosophical. But there should be
20 something that lifts you out of yourself when you see
21 it, the way I feel when I go to the University of
22 Virginia, for instance or the Salk Institute or
23 Chartres Cathedral. There is some moment when you're
24 just awe struck. And you think beyond it just being a
25 pile of bricks.

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1 And it's a characteristic of a building
2 that a dog wouldn't appreciate, but only a human being
3 would. Because a dog would appreciate a warm house,
4 you know, that it can curl up in. It's not too big.
5 It's not too small. People appreciate that too.

6 If a dog doesn't know if the house lifts
7 that person spiritually and that's why we have
8 cathedrals and churches and we didn't just happen by
9 chance and put the capital on access. You know?

10 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. All
11 right. Thank you.

12 MR. ESOCOFF: I could go on for another
13 week or so.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I'm sure, but I
15 appreciate it. No, actually, I really appreciate it.

16 MR. ESOCOFF: Actually I've become less
17 passionate about architecture as you can tell over the
18 years.

19 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Next time, add
20 the Capitol in there somewhere.

21 MR. ESOCOFF: The Capitol.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: The other thing
23 that --

24 MR. ESOCOFF: The house of the people on
25 access for the first time in history. That's an

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1 amazing moment. UVA, the first time the library, a
2 symbol of everybody's access to advance themselves
3 through their own hard work and merit, was put on
4 access. Not the Pope, not the King of France but the
5 symbol of opportunity, that library. That's why UVA
6 is voted the best architectural piece by more
7 architects, more consistently than any other piece of
8 work.

9 And it's a pattern for the Salk Institute.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I think next time
11 I'll ask for the long version.

12 But thank you very much. I appreciate
13 that.

14 MR. ESOCOFF: You're welcome.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: That will help me on
16 other issues.

17 Mr. Abdo, I just wanted to say that the
18 Bryan School at that time having dealt with them and
19 normally we don't bring other cases, but that was a
20 model of the way the community worked with their
21 project and I'm glad to hear the report back.

22 And as Mr. Willer would tell you, one of
23 my issues is always the LSDBE's which I hear you have
24 superceded that in setting up the place down at 1301 -
25 - turn your mike on.

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1 MR. ABDO: Yes. 1301 8th Street, NE.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I'm glad to hear
3 that.

4 The other thing is the parking spaces and
5 I think you mentioned 529 and I know you're within the
6 requirement of the zoning ordinance, but what are you
7 going to do with -- what are those additional spaces?
8 Are they going to be marked for visitors or how is that
9 going to work?

10 MR. ABDO: Well, we're going to make, you
11 know, parking available to, you know, additional
12 parking available to unit owners for guests' use. It
13 maybe that the condominium association ultimately
14 decides to pool some of those spaces to allow for
15 guest use.

16 We are also making accommodation -- I don't
17 know whether or not we brought it up here during the
18 course of the evening that we are making an
19 accommodation for ZipCar or FlexCar to have a position
20 in the building or on the property.

21 We really truly believe that, you know,
22 four to one is the requirement. We're better than one
23 to one. And we really think that this is a true
24 opportunity for people to participate in housing
25 without the need for a car, given the location of this

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1 building and its access to public transportation.

2 So, we wholeheartedly believe that there's
3 an absolute abundance of parking for the site.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I'm glad you
5 mentioned the ZipCar and FlexCar.

6 But there's one thing that's on the ANC
7 letter, which I was going to bring up that you brought
8 up about the ZipCar already.

9 The bicycle parking. I know you obviously
10 have a good working relationship with the community
11 from what I'm hearing thus far. So, I'm sure that
12 you've done a number of things, but where were you
13 with the bicycle parking? Is that something that's
14 still out there, or --

15 MR. ABDO: No, no. It's part of the plan
16 and I'll let Phil speak to that. But that is an
17 integral part of the building is abundant bicycle
18 parking.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: So, I guess the short
20 version is basically I'm looking at the list here from
21 the ANC. Basically everything here you all have
22 worked it out?

23 MR. ABDO: Yes. And candidly --

24 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I don't really need
25 to --

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1 MR. ABDON: No, no. I mean but candidly,
2 the ANC, you know. There's members of the ANC that
3 had great ideas. I mean, this goes back to what we
4 talked about before. I mean, you're got Commissioners
5 that, you know, that we are looking to lean on as we
6 go forward with this project.

7 You know, Commissioner Pernell,
8 Commissioner -- all the Commissioners that you saw up
9 here before have come forward and told us, we will be
10 a conduit for you to help residents of this community
11 to get jobs.

12 They also came up with ideas. Richard
13 Leyman, I remember came up with the idea with FlexCar
14 and other members and ZipCar and other members of the
15 Board. I mean, these are all ideas that we embrace.
16 We don't have every answer. And I tend to get
17 uncomfortable around people that think they do.

18 And, you know, this is -- this is
19 collectively -- I tried to say that at the very
20 beginning. A team effort to put this together for you
21 and we're very proud of it and we're very thankful of
22 all these community groups that stepped in and helped
23 us make this a great project.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I know the work of
25 especially Commissioner Pernell and others and I know

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1 that endorsement doesn't come lightly. So, I can tell
2 you've definitely done some work there in that
3 community.

4 MR. ABDO: So, has he. I mean, he's
5 passionate about his constituents.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes.

7 MR. ABDO: And he's right to be that way
8 and look, we know -- we recognize true leadership
9 within that community.

10 Commissioner Dixon and other, Anthony
11 Rivera, we think is going to be an amazing
12 Commissioner. These are people that really care about
13 the people that live in that neighborhood. And they
14 are going to help us with our outreach. They're going
15 to help us with the apprenticeship programs. They're
16 going to help along with the H Street/Main Street and
17 others to bring people into the fold.

18 If we're going to bring \$150 million of
19 development to that block, we want as much of it to
20 stay in that neighborhood as it humanly possible. And
21 they are the ones that are going to help make that
22 happen.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: And I'll just say
24 this because you took a lot of my questions that I
25 normally ask in other cases.

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1 The affordable housing issue. You have
2 definitely raised the bar and, again, as I said in
3 Bryan's School the model between the community and the
4 Applicant at that time, I would say you have raised
5 the bar with the affordable housing issue and it's
6 good to see.

7 MR. ABDO: And I thank you very much and I
8 also want to go back to state that, you know, part of,
9 you know, we did talk about some issues of height and
10 things like that. You know, there is an impact. As
11 we start even considering shrinking things here,
12 that's impacted directly. And we want, you know, we
13 struck a balance here. We worked really hard, you
14 know.

15 We had a talk in our office awhile back,
16 you know. Isn't this a perfect PUD? You know, is
17 there such a thing as a perfect PUD? Maybe not. We
18 feel that this is darn close to it and we've really
19 done everything we could to keep everybody together on
20 the same page and make this a win/win all the way
21 across the board.

22 And I thank you for your comment.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Ms. Prince, I
24 just have one question for Mr. Wells. I don't know if
25 anybody else does. And it's very good that nobody can

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1 see behind this. Papers is just everywhere.

2 But I can tell you that Potomac
3 Development Corporation raised about the impact on
4 Second Street, what this addition would do from a
5 traffic standpoint. And I'm not sure if you're
6 familiar with that January 13th, 2005, letter. I'm
7 sorry, January 13th, 2005.

8 And they talk about an addition to the
9 main service entrance from the station place. They
10 just talk about all of the heavy traffic that is going
11 to be on Second Street. And to where we were talking
12 about proposing, I believe, an entrance.

13 Have you looked into that?

14 MR. WELLS: Yes, sir.

15 I'm familiar with the letter and we did,
16 in fact, prepare a transportation impact study. It
17 was reviewed by DDOT. They concur in our opinion that
18 the traffic levels are manageable.

19 We looked at the existing traffic volumes.

20 We looked at the additional traffic that SEC and I
21 think ATF and other projects that are under
22 construction will add there. And we looked at
23 additional traffic that this project would generate.
24 And we riddled it to that single driveway and we
25 believe it's manageable. DDOT concurs with that that

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1 it is a manageable traffic impact.

2 And it's my opinion also that that
3 driveway for the reasons that Mr. Abdo and Mr. Esocoff
4 listed, that's the right place for the garage
5 entrance. The right place is not on I Street or Third
6 Street. It should be on Second Street.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: And let me ask, Mr.
8 Abdo, one other question. It may be in here
9 somewhere. This is a voluminous record.

10 During the construction, if everything
11 moves forward during the construction, have you worked
12 out a way and I'm sure you probably worked with the
13 neighborhood, have you worked out a way with where
14 your folks who are going to be doing the construction
15 are going to park and all of those types of things?

16 MR. ABDON: Great question. We will be
17 relying not only on our traffic engineer, but we have
18 talked with certain leaders, Stanton park Neighborhood
19 group, in particular, that brought that to our
20 attention.

21 Without question, we're going to meet with
22 the neighborhood. We're going to come up with a
23 traffic plan that's palatable, that makes sense. The
24 last thing that we ever do is come into a neighborhood
25 and be a bad neighbor. We want to be a good neighbor

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1 from the git-go. And if there are ideas and ways to,
2 you know, to accommodate, we will absolutely.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. That's all the
4 questions I have.

5 Commissioner Parsons.

6 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: I want to thank you
7 for the landscape plan that you produced. Actually, I
8 want to thank you for the entire presentation.

9 It is a very thorough, well done PUD
10 application. Some of our are getting a little sloppy.

11 And this is not one of them.

12 In the area of the landscape plan, I'm
13 very impressed, not only a careful selection of a
14 variety of species for each particular area, but a
15 commitment to size, which is unusual in these times.
16 So, that's great.

17 I am concerned to make sure that we have
18 in the record the right roof plan. That is, there was
19 on in the October booklet. There is one here that's
20 free-floating that arrived in the record recently.
21 And then there's the one on the screen. Each one gets
22 better. I think you finally invited the landscape
23 architect onto the roof.

24 Is that what happened? It's all right.
25 But it's getting better, Phil.

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1 MR. ESOCOFF: It's evolving and, obviously
2 we want to get it to have a garden.

3 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Really, it's pretty
4 sterile in these renditions and this one is getting
5 there. So, I want to make sure this is in the record
6 and an equal commitment that you made in the design
7 details down on the ground plan.

8 So, this does look like a place that
9 somebody might want to get married in, but this one
10 does not. So, is that in our record or is this a new
11 exhibit tonight?

12 MR. ABDO: It can be a new exhibit
13 tonight.

14 I mean, the way this --

15 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: It's somewhat
16 better advanced.

17 MR. ABDO: It is in the record.

18 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Oh, well.

19 MR. ABDO: That's what I'm told.

20 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Well, so much
21 paper, so little time. I don't find it.

22 MR. ABDO: I just want to say that we are
23 constantly, you know, to lead up to tonight. This is
24 our big night and we have been constantly refining
25 this, trying to make it better and better as we go.

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1 And I know that we got stuff to you very early so that
2 we could get into the system that didn't reflect where
3 we ultimately knew we were going to be. And what
4 you're seeing now is that refinement.

5 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Well, I hope that
6 more than a PowerPoint kind of exhibit comes in as a
7 separate landscape plan and maybe you can embellish it
8 as you have on the ground plan with plant materials.
9 The variety of material you want to use and just give
10 it the same level of treatment.

11 Thank you.

12 MR. ABDO: Thank you.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Mr. Jeffries. Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Well, first of all
15 I would like echo Commissioner Parson' comments on
16 this presentation. I mean, I've been on this
17 Commission for nine months and I have, you know,
18 consistently been puzzled by really what makes some of
19 these applications PUDs when you really look at the
20 definition and I really do feel that this project in
21 totality is so incredibly comprehensive and covers so
22 much ground in so many different area. And in places
23 where you sort of wish that, for example, the entrance
24 to parking could be more centralized and it's
25 forgivable given, you know, maintenance of the

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1 historic structure and how this sits.

2 And also when you really consider the
3 western gateway of H Street plan and really looking at
4 this piece, this part is sort of being transitional
5 from the more height that is sort of west of it. The
6 height really does not bother me.

7 And I think that the design and the
8 attention to design has been, you know, absolutely
9 compelling and I am very thankful to hear an architect
10 talk about design and the way that Mr. Esocoff has.
11 And I agree with you wholeheartedly, having been an
12 architecture graduate from Notre Dame, I do understand
13 that so often, you know, everybody's a designer. You
14 know. Everybody can step up and make a comment.

15 So, I have a couple of comments and one
16 is, I was interested in getting a sense of a view of
17 this development as you're traveling east, almost on
18 top of the Hopscotch Bridge going east, trying to get
19 a sense of how all that looks. I mean, sort of the
20 comparison being adjacent to the bridge and looking at
21 some of the low rise.

22 I don't think I've seen anything like
23 that, but I think that would have been an interesting
24 view. Because, again, this whole notion of approach
25 and gateway, I think that really would have captured

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1 that whole notion of creating a gateway.

2 So -- and then the other question I had is
3 that I looked under the community outreach, page 9,
4 and all the meetings, and I didn't see H Street CDC.
5 And I didn't -- and I was wondering whether they had
6 any level of participation in the community as it
7 relates to this project?

8 MR. MILLMAN: Okay. We did have telephone
9 conversations with key people at H Street CDC. We
10 asked to -- if they wanted to meet with us and they
11 said -- I believe they're actually here tonight to
12 testify. So, I'm not sure exactly what they're going
13 to say, but my understanding is that they are a
14 proponent of the project.

15 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

16 MR. MILLMAN: We just didn't meet with
17 them in person.

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. Okay.

19 And also I noted and I had some questions
20 from Office of Planning but I can really sort of ask
21 them about the whole notion of tax revenues and so
22 forth generated from a project of this scale and size.

23 And I'm also very appreciative because we see so many
24 mixed-use projects in this business for ground floor
25 retail with housing above. You know, let me tell you

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1 didn't always work. It really doesn't. And it's
2 easier said than done. And it's good to see a
3 development that is pure housing, that really
4 incorporates the open green space. And this project
5 will be a driver for so much of the retail that in
6 many cases is somewhat underutilized along H Street.

7 So, I'm interested in hearing those who
8 are opposed to this, but I must say and I'm just going
9 to be very frank. I'm very much inclined to go
10 forward with this.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Should be stop now?
12 No. That's just a joke. That was just a joke.

13 Any other questions for Mr. --

14 I'm going to ask the one party we have,
15 Mr. -- you know, one thing about me. I always try to
16 do everything off the top of my head. But I think a
17 true Tallant and whoever is going to represent the
18 Stanton Park neighborhood Association, if they have
19 any cross examination for the Applicant?

20 Okay. Let the record reflect that they
21 spoke and said they do not have any cross examination.

22 Next, we'll go to the Report of the Office
23 -- and, again, the ANC. Let me just say the ANC
24 normally is a party because of the way their letter is
25 stated. They did not actually -- it was not stated to

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1 the fact that I think we can give them great weight.
2 But we will hear from them when they come up.

3 Am I correct, Ms. Schellin?

4 MS. SCHELLIN: Yes. It's just that their
5 letter did not authorize anyone to represent them
6 tonight. The Chair is not here is my understanding.
7 Oh, the Chair is here.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: The Chair is here.
9 Okay.

10 Mr. Dixon? Okay.

11 Well, since he's here, and he is the
12 Chair.

13 Do you have any cross examination of the
14 Applicant?

15 I'm going to ask you to do this for me.
16 Come to the microphone so we can get you on the
17 record.

18 MR. DIXON: Good evening. My name is Mark
19 Dixon, ANC Chair 6C.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good. Do you have
21 any cross examination?

22 MR. DIXON: Not at the time right now.

23 I have my zoning representative who wants
24 to speak on behalf of our Commission.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: He is going to speak

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1 on behalf of the Commission?

2 MR. DIXON: Yes. He is. I did give him
3 the permission to do so.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let that reflect that
5 the Chair has said that they do have permission.
6 That's saves us the trouble.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. DIXON: Okay.

9 MS. PRINCE: If I could just interject
10 once again.

11 The formal resolution of the ANC and it's
12 only the written resolution that's entitled to great
13 weight does not authorize any individual Commissioner
14 to speak on behalf of the ANC tonight.

15 So, I believe that any ANC Commissioners
16 here while welcome to testify are testifying on their
17 own personal behalf and not on behalf of the ANC.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Ms. Prince, typically
19 and you're here probably more than I am, but typically
20 I believe that when the Chair, at least on the
21 Commission, I believe that when the chair is present
22 we usually take the word of the chair, typically.

23 And they are in support, I believe, aren't
24 they?

25 I mean, I could see if they were --

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1 MS. PRINCE: That's fine.

2 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you. I
3 forgot where I was.

4 Okay. So, the Report of the Office of
5 Planning.

6 MR. McGETTIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair,
7 members of the Commission.

8 My name is David McGettigan from the
9 Office of Planning. With me is Ellen McCarthy,
10 Interim Director of the Office of Planning, Cindy
11 Petkac, who is the Ward 6 Planner.

12 I suppose the Commission hasn't met a
13 developer like Jim Abdo before. It is certainly
14 unusual to see one who is so committed and
15 enthusiastic about his project. Committed to historic
16 preservation and wants to do a quality project that's
17 going to be a lasting building. And his choice of
18 Phil Esocoff as an architect, I think, is an example
19 of his commitment to a quality project.

20 When we have PUDs come through, not all of
21 them, you know, express this thoroughness and great
22 degree of commitment to the standards that the PUDs
23 are looking for. And I think some of the important
24 things that they've presented to us that are above and
25 beyond, particularly are the architecture discussion.

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1 And we outlined in our report a list of all the
2 elements that Phil sent to me that he feels are above
3 and beyond what a normal architecture would be.

4 And it's -- you know, some of the things
5 are very simple elements, but I think combined
6 together we could say that this architecture has some
7 merit and some superior qualities to it.

8 I also got a list from him of all the
9 green technologies and elements that are making this
10 building environmentally friendly that are going to
11 reduce the run-off, reduce the energy consumption.
12 And I think these are all important things that go
13 into the architecture and that also support the
14 environmental elements of the Comprehensive Plan to
15 put these in our buildings. We want to see more green
16 buildings in our PUDs.

17 And then the third thing is the affordable
18 housing, which is a significant amenity for this. Our
19 Report evaluates the Comprehensive Plan and goes over
20 some of the -- how this project meets that in many
21 different ways, the goals of the Comprehensive Plan
22 and I can answer any specific questions about it. And
23 I'll let Ms. McCarthy discuss some of the amenities of
24 the project and how they meet these standards.

25 MS. MCCARTHY: Thank you. Good evening,

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1 Mr. Chair and members of the Commission.

2 We've certainly heard your admonition to
3 keep it short because we understand that Mr. Esocoff
4 used up all our time. And we will --

5 BICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I don't think I said
6 that public, but --

7 MS. MCCARTHY: We'll be happy to do that
8 but there are some important things that I think we
9 want to get on the record about this project.

10 The Office of Planning is very happy to
11 support this project and to recommend strongly its
12 approval. And some of the things that we would like
13 to signal include going back to one of the basic
14 important jobs that the Office of Planning always with
15 the PUD is to talk about what is the relief that is
16 requested, the flexibility for the zoning regulations
17 and whether or not the amenities that are provided
18 balance off that relief.

19 The relief that's requested in this case
20 is there is approximately 122,625 feet of bonus
21 density that is provided over and above what would be
22 achieved as a matter of right. But it's important to
23 note that a substantial portion of that is bonus only
24 in that the height that would be a matter of right
25 height on the property is exceeded by this project as

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1 part of an overall solution to try to provide the
2 openness and the stepping back from the historic
3 building that otherwise would not -- it would not be
4 possible to maintain as Mr. Abdo testified earlier,
5 density sufficient to provide some of the quality of
6 the project and still retain the historic building
7 were it not possible to pile some of that density into
8 additional height over and above what would be
9 permitted as a matter of right.

10 We too had expressed some concern to the
11 developer, some of the concerns that Mr. Hildebrand
12 mentioned earlier about the height and we're happy to
13 -- we're pleased that we were able to sit down and
14 work with Mr. Abdo and Mr. Esocoff on some very
15 detailed shadow studies, looking very closely at where
16 the shadows would fall. We were very concerned about
17 the low-scale row houses across Second Street as the
18 crest of Third Street and were one of the reasons why
19 Mr. Esocoff cut that notch out of the back tower that
20 we could then look and see that it had, even though it
21 is a small notch, it was located in just the right
22 place to provide sunshine to the low-scale houses
23 across the street.

24 So, we were satisfied in terms of the
25 shadow studies that, although the tower is high, the

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1 light and air across the street had been provided for.

2 We also noted that, although the Comp Plan
3 doesn't give us much guidance in terms of height and
4 density on the site because it's characterized as
5 institutional on the land use map, what is around --
6 it is in as Mr. McGettigan report notes, it's in the
7 Eckington development opportunity area, which is an
8 area that encourages development adjacent to the rail
9 yards. And it is immediately adjacent to a large
10 swath of the Comprehensive Plan. It's in Mr.
11 McGettigan's report that is production and technical
12 employment, which generally permits a substantial bulk
13 in size of building. And, I believe, a moderate,
14 medium to high density commercial.

15 So, the kind of scale of the project that
16 we're talking about, we think, is not inappropriate to
17 the guidance that the Comprehensive Plan gives us. At
18 least the more specific guidance that we had on what
19 is south and west of the project.

20 But we want to note that Mr. McGettigan's
21 report gives you a very long list of what we consider
22 to be substantial public benefits and amenities from
23 the project.

24 Some that we just wanted to highlight
25 tonight, that we think are important is, first of all,

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1 to recognize that this is construction of housing on a
2 site that is commercially zoned. And that is
3 important not only because of what we all recognized
4 as the tax and revenue benefits to the District from
5 encouraging additional residents and additional home
6 ownership, but it's also then important because of
7 that 120,000 square feet of bonus the developer has
8 included 15 percent of that bonus density in
9 affordable housing and affordable at the 80 percent
10 level of the area-wide median income.

11 So, almost 20,000 square feet is a
12 substantial contribution of affordable housing.

13 The preservation of this structure. I
14 mean, an 1873 building, the restoration of that is a
15 not inconsiderable expense. It's a very important
16 building in our local history. I feel personally
17 attached to it as important local history, because I
18 sang there as a child when it was still Little Sisters
19 of the Poor and the housing for the elderly that they
20 provided on the site, which I realized means I am
21 getting to the historic level, to the historic age.

22 But the site planning --you know, many
23 times developers will come before us and they will
24 talk about site planning as an amenity of the project.

25 But in this case, as Mr. Parsons recognized, not only

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1 is the landscape planning superb in terms of the
2 choice of plant material and the heights, but the site
3 planning, the connections to H Street which, you know,
4 when Union Station and the Air Rights Development
5 occurs, across the street from Union Station will be
6 so important for taking what is now a fairly sterile
7 environment and making that a much more pleasant
8 pedestrian path to connect Union Station and the
9 downtown basically with H Street and encourage -- you
10 will recall this Commission spent quite a bit of time
11 stressing for station plates, the importance of an H
12 Street entrance. And I think there were some -- we
13 had some problems convincing the developers of station
14 plates that it was important to have a direct access
15 onto H Street.

16 But this project, because of the direct
17 connections will only reinforce the quality of that
18 pedestrian environment and make it easier for us to
19 draw people down into H Street to the retail that is
20 increasingly becoming revitalized along H Street.

21 And so I just wanted to mention, because
22 normally the Office of Planning is very strong on
23 ground-floor retail with residential above, although
24 we acknowledge as Mr. Jeffries said, that sometimes
25 that difficult to make work well.

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1 In this case, the lack of retail on the
2 ground floor did not trouble us at all partly because
3 of the historic building and how difficult it would be
4 to make retail work there. But also because of the H
5 Street plan, the market study done for the H Street
6 plan had indicated that the level of market demand for
7 retail on H Street was not the demand for retail that
8 could be supported by the neighborhood was not high
9 enough to support the amount of retail that's on H
10 Street now. So, our plan recommended concentrating
11 that retail in the middle part of H Street and
12 focusing on high intensity residential development on
13 this side, on the west side of H Street. Then ending
14 up having the high density residential, having a
15 retail section, having an art-related section and then
16 ending up at the former Hechinger mall on the far
17 eastern side of the stretch of H Street.

18 So, the last thing, we would just direct
19 your attention to is the important role that this
20 project played in the larger context of the community,
21 that it establishes a residential anchor to keep a 24-
22 hour presence at the street level on the west side of
23 H Street, which will help balance the massive
24 commercial development that this station plays and the
25 additional commercial developments around there that

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1 were pointed out in the beginning of the presentation.
2 And that this kind of major investment in a
3 residential project on the western end of H Street
4 will then bookend the Arboretum Place, Clark
5 Construction project on the east side of H Street, and
6 help us keep filling in in the middle with the Atlas
7 Theater and the development around there to bring back
8 H Street to the kind of glory of the important
9 neighborhood retail street that it was and to bring
10 back some of the vacant and underutilized buildings
11 that are there.

12 So, we think this will have an important
13 catalytic effect and we're very pleased with the
14 quality of the architecture, with the preservation
15 amenity and the construction of the housing with
16 affordable housing. And we would be happy to answer
17 any questions about our report.

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: I have a question
19 and a comment.

20 In terms of the affordable housing, I now
21 that you get to -- for that to -- that has not quite
22 been fully worked out in terms of like levels of
23 income. I mean, are we just looking at --

24 MS. MCCARTHY: Well, we've passed out a
25 sheet tonight which does represent the essence of the

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1 -- or we gave it to Ms. Schellin. Right?

2 MS. SCHELLIN: Yes.

3 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. I'm sorry.
4 Okay.

5 MS. MCCARTHY: That we did meet with the
6 developer and further flushed out some of the details
7 and what we're handing out to you tonight is that that
8 information which was developed after the Office of
9 Planning had submitted its report.

10 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. So, it's
11 saying here having household income not exceeding 80
12 percent of area median income.

13 MS. MCCARTHY: Right.

14 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: So, that could
15 mean that all 26 units are at 80 percent of area
16 median income?

17 MS. MCCARTHY: That could be the case.

18 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

19 MS. MCCARTHY: We -- you will recall that
20 when we set that standard, it was, we worked with the
21 Department of Housing and Community Development and
22 the standard that they set for their housing purchase
23 assistance program is 80 percent AMI. So, we were
24 able to offer -- and then we started with -- started
25 at that level with the Washington Clinic project. We

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1 wanted to design something that would work easily and
2 effectively for the developer because DHCD was already
3 certifying. People already had a list of certified
4 potential purchasers that there were there on the HPAC
5 list, so we're using that same listing.

6 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay. I am having
7 NCRC and so forth when we always real to try to look
8 for diversification of some various income points, not
9 just 80 percent, but 60 percent and 50 percent. So,
10 you know, again. I think that there are quite a few
11 benefits associated with this. So, I'm not going to
12 make a fuss, but just duly noted that, you know, I
13 typically, in terms of affordable housing, would like
14 to see, you know, various incomes, you know, as part
15 of the overall affordable housing package.

16 And given that there are really a number
17 of families that are at the 50 percent and the 60
18 percent, I understand what you're saying, Ellen, in
19 terms of how this was all generated, but I just wanted
20 to really put that for the record.

21 And then my comment is that, you know,
22 listening to the story of H Street it just reminds me
23 in terms of the bookends between the western gateway
24 and then Hechinger Mall and that those -- those forces
25 start to really work to sort of build in development

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1 one block at a time.

2 It's a very similar story for 14th Street,
3 you know, when you consider and the Tivoli and all
4 that's going on, northern Columbia Heights and then
5 looking at U Street or even further south. And
6 obviously you have Bill Hecht that had a lot to do
7 with that. So, it's actually a very interesting sort
8 of connection between sort of what you're looking to
9 do here and then what actually has occurred at 14th
10 Street.

11 So, thank you.

12 MR. McGETTIGAN: If I could comment.

13 There is some variety in the affordable
14 housing that will be provided. There is going to be
15 some one bedroom and two bedroom and so there -- but
16 there will be different types of units and they must
17 be in proportion to the whole development.

18 And the whole development is going to have
19 a variety of unit-types as well. So, there's -- it's
20 not going to be all the same type of unit. And,
21 therefore, different income levels.

22 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Really, my
23 comments were just purely based on income levels. I
24 understand that, you know, there's not going to be
25 differences in terms of placement of units and there

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1 might be some differences in finishes here and there,
2 but I recognize that, you know, pretty much there is
3 supposed to be fairly transparent from -- seamless
4 from sort of the market rate unit.

5 MS. McCARTHY: Right. And we also -- we
6 had discussed with the developer the possibility of
7 increasing the percentage of affordability or looking
8 at different aspect of affordability, but we -- I
9 think we also recognized this is the very first
10 project of its kind in this neighborhood. And there's
11 a substantial amount of expense in the historic
12 building. So, we felt that all and all those factors
13 balanced out and that 80 percent AMI at 15 percent of
14 the total bonus was the right level this time.

15 We probably will apply a different
16 standard to some future project.

17 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: I mean, again,
18 looking at, again, all the benefits and that this is a
19 project that to me really speaks to the definition of
20 a PUD, I mean, those kind of things are almost, again,
21 forgivable. And I'm not, you know, really looking to,
22 you know, slow down anything here for that reason.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other questions?

24 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I do have a
25 question. You mentioned the Clark Project as the east

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1 bookend. What is the height of their -- looking at
2 their --

3 MS. McCARTHY: That's a very different
4 kind of project. It's closer to the more row house
5 neighborhoods and so they are basically -- it's garden
6 apartments and row houses.

7 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I was looking at
8 the H Street study when I was going through the
9 documents here and I noticed that the development
10 that's being proposed here on this site is
11 significantly different than what was recommended in
12 the study.

13 Can you comment on that please?

14 MS. McCARTHY: We had gone back to our H
15 Street planners and asked that same question. And
16 they indicated to us that at the point in time in
17 which the study was being prepared there was -- there
18 was not a thought that the Children's Museum was going
19 to move. And so they thought the Children's Museum
20 would continue to be there and the likelihood of being
21 able to do a taller apartment building wasn't going to
22 be there because the Children's Museum would still
23 need a substantial portion of the square. So, they
24 recommended a lower height.

25 But when we went back to them and asked

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1 them based on the conversations they had had with the
2 community and which Ms. Ricks and Mr. Woody had spent
3 a considerable amount of time working with people in
4 the community about the project, they did not find
5 this to be inconsistent with the kind of vision that
6 had been articulated by people in the planning
7 process.

8 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Okay. And just
9 my recollection of the street is that with few
10 exceptions is that it's a fairly low height street.

11 Does this change in this establishment of
12 a 110 foot height have any potential future impact on
13 that kind of bulk working its way eastward in the
14 commercial section of H Street.

15 MS. McCARTHY: The H Street plan
16 articulates several zones and this was included in
17 what was called the urban living zone. And the plan
18 has some language encouraging that there be higher
19 density, higher buildings on this western end to
20 compliment, to be transit-oriented and to take
21 advantage of the proximity to Union Station.

22 But then the vision then is for a
23 considerably lower density and lower heights along the
24 rest of the corridor. So, I think we will -- I think
25 we would tell people very clearly that we would,

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1 especially because most of the rest of the buildings
2 really directly -- most of the rest of H Street
3 directly abuts low-scale row houses that are
4 immediately -- that are on the same square. That are
5 immediately abutting that. And that that would not be
6 compatible to have substantially higher buildings on
7 that.

8 Plus, we are, you know, it's fabulous
9 historic stock, even though it's not an officially
10 designated district. The historic preservation staff
11 tried to be very clear with our neighborhood planning
12 staff that they didn't end with when we were looking
13 at zoning for the H Street overlay, that we didn't
14 want to create any incentives that would cause
15 unnecessary demolition of the buildings with the kind
16 of superb character that a lot of the older buildings
17 have on that stretch.

18 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.
20 Thanks to the Office of Planning.

21 Also we mentioned other Government
22 reports. We do have a report from the Department of
23 Transportation, will flush out the issues, but also in
24 support.

25 Any other -- any other Government

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1 agencies?

2 MR. McGETTIGAN: No. We haven't received
3 reports from any other Government agencies.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

5 Moving right along with our agenda. We
6 want to get straight to the -- let me back up.

7 Ms. Prince, you are exactly correct in
8 regulation 3012.5, ANC great weight. Would you be
9 amenable to us because they are in support. I could
10 see if it was different. Would you be amenable to us
11 at the end leaving the record open and we can accept
12 that into the record, giving the ANC the opportunity
13 to come up to speed. I would think you would want
14 that?

15 MS. PRINCE: Yes. Yes.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good. All right.
17 Thank you.

18 Report of the Advisory Neighborhood
19 Commission 6C. The Chairperson, Mr. Dixon, is here.

20 Oh, I'm sorry. Thank you. Usually when
21 Carol is doing all this, I just sit back and go to the
22 next thing. But since I'm doing it, I need to pay
23 more attention.

24 Let me do this first.

25 Cross examination of the Office of

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1 Planning? The ANC? Do you have any cross examination
2 of the Office of Planning? Okay.

3 Stanton Park? That's it. Thank you.

4 Now, let me figure out where I was. I was
5 making a statement. It's getting late. It's been a
6 long day.

7 Okay. So, we're straight with the 3012.5.
8 Greatway, we're straight with that.

9 The ANC, if you would come forward.
10 Report of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6C.

11 And me just -- one person who has been
12 designated to speak. I think Commissioner Pernell is
13 representing another organization in his capacity.
14 And I now he's a commissioner, so let's hear from you
15 and then we will call the groups up in support after.

16 MR. RIVERA: My name is Anthony Rivera.
17 This is my single member district, 6C05. And I'm also
18 the Chair of the Planning and Zoning Committee.

19 I only have two issues that I have with
20 the project. We are in support of the project. But I
21 think the Office of Planning addressed a little --
22 addressed it a little bit, but one thing we are
23 proposing which wasn't mentioned in the presentation
24 is establishing a Community Advisory Board to oversee
25 the hiring and -- well, not oversee. Put input into

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1 the hiring of people from the community and how the
2 affordable housing is going to be dolled out per se,
3 which you received a letter probably today stating --
4 as a supplement.

5 The second thing is the issue of
6 affordable housing, which the Office of Planning was
7 trying to address.

8 In the District of Columbia, affordable
9 housing is a new -- I don't know how to say it.
10 Affordable housing is not what I used to call
11 affordable housing.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: It's starting not to
13 exist.

14 MR. RIVERA: Right.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

16 MR. RIVERA: We see condominiums. I'm
17 also a real estate broker. We see condominiums going
18 for \$450 a square foot. That's not affordable
19 housing. Okay.

20 And as the Office of Planning was saying,
21 if you're saying the -- what were you saying, the
22 median income of the person -- I think in the District
23 what is it? \$90,000? Somewhere around there?

24 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: For a family of
25 four, I believe. It's about that.

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1 MR. RIVERA: So, that means that person
2 probably has to make somewhere between \$50 and \$60. I
3 would imagine to throw out a number on the units. I
4 know you don't have a marketing number, but imagine
5 the marking number would be somewhere between \$160,000
6 and \$200,000. And that's affordable housing?

7 Nobody -- that's affordable housing.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Actually,
9 Commissioner Rivera, we want to hear your testimony.

10 MR. RIVERA: Okay. I understand.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: You want to question
12 us, but we want to hear your testimony.

13 MR. RIVERA: I understand. I'm sorry.

14 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: And also, we don't
15 know what these units are being marketed.

16 MR. RIVERA: Well, we don't now. I'm just
17 saying examples and I will get to my point.

18 I'm just giving an example.

19 Say, for example, it's \$160,000 or just a
20 number. And that's someone making \$50,000, \$60,000.
21 They are a GS-11. Or I'm just throwing that out
22 there. And they work in Goddard Space Center. That
23 person is going to need a car. Or they probably
24 already own a car at that price range.

25 And my thing is to find a way to make the

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1 parking space affordable for people that's going into
2 these affordable units. Because, if we're going to
3 give them affordable unit and they make that and their
4 back-end ration is 30, I think, the Office of Planning
5 told us, how are they going to be able to afford that
6 parking space?

7 So, my issue is that we need to work
8 together with the developer and the city to try to
9 solve, and I guess the Office of Planning or DHCD or
10 whoever is telling us, to try to solve that problem,
11 because we can't offer affordable housing and then
12 say, well, you can't buy the parking space.

13 So, that's one of the issues that I think
14 that everybody should pay close attention to because
15 it's almost -- I won't say it's almost discriminatory
16 if you're saying I can buy the unit, but I can't
17 afford -- I'm not claiming that, but I'm saying I
18 can't afford the parking space. Because market
19 parking spaces are somewhere around anywhere between
20 \$25,000 and \$40,000.

21 So, we have to find out a way to bridge
22 the gap if we're going to provide this affordable
23 housing.

24 Other than that, the Commission, we're in
25 full support of the project. I'm a stakeholder. I'm

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1 a neighbor, very close to that project. I think it's
2 a good thing for the city, for H Street itself. It
3 will bring residents to help spawn development on H
4 Street and probably loosen a lot of people that are --
5 oh, we have a lot of people on H Street holding on to
6 properties and speculating and not allowing other
7 people that want to do things in the neighborhood to
8 buy the property at a reasonable price.

9 So, I think it would spawn people to start
10 developing.

11 That is basically the testimony I have for
12 today.

13 Thank you.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you,
15 Commissioner Rivera. I think you bring up a good
16 point.

17 Any questions? No questions?

18 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Yes. Actually,
19 Commissioner Rivera.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Hold your seat. Hold
21 your seat.

22 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Thank you so
23 much for your testimony.

24 What do you think of the developer's offer
25 for a \$40,000 trust to help offset the cost of the

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1 parking for people who need a little help to get that
2 parking space.

3 MR. RIVERA: Well, the issue will -- it
4 will not be a little help. It will be a lot of help
5 or none. I think it's a very good faith gesture and
6 I've talked to Mr. Abdo about that, but I think we
7 have to find another solution to solve the problem.
8 Because if you got a back-end ratio of 30 and not 32
9 and adds on another \$2,000 or \$3,000 a person could
10 afford. You know, because usually affordable housing,
11 they're buying at their max. So, you'd probably have
12 to squeeze another \$2,000 or \$3,000.

13 Say for example, you gave the \$5,000.
14 That still doesn't make up the cost of that space.
15 And he needs to make that amount of money off the
16 space. We have to find a solution. I mean, we can't
17 just beat the developer up for the price of the
18 parking because to go underground I'm familiar with
19 it. It costs a lot of money.

20 If they are above-ground parking spaces,
21 it will be a different story. So, it think there's
22 another solution that has to be worked out to try to
23 subsidize the parking.

24 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Do you have a
25 suggestion?

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1 MR. RIVERA: Well, one of my suggestion
2 when I was talking to Mr. Abdo the other day was that
3 there used to be a program at HPAP and I'm not quite
4 familiar on what they're doing now. But one
5 suggestion was, they had a program called VPAP that
6 gave a grant to help a person buy a home. And I'm
7 thinking if we look at this and we could get some kind
8 of high-bred financing through the city to help
9 subsidize the parking, maybe -- I don't know how many
10 funds are out there, but I know that there was -- at a
11 time I sold three houses on VPAP. But then the houses
12 only cost \$90,000. So, \$10,000 made a big difference
13 or \$15,000 was a big difference in the down payment
14 and closing costs.

15 So, I mean, we're talking about a gap of
16 about maybe \$20,000 to \$30,000 just to throw a number
17 out there of where we need to try to find to solve the
18 problem. I mean, it will be a great model because
19 since affordable housing is going to be \$200,000 here
20 in the District, it would be a great model to try to
21 put a financing -- a high-bred financing tool in
22 place.

23 I don't know who can put it together.
24 Maybe it can come through some of the banking
25 institutions in the city or the city itself. But, we

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1 need to address on trying to find out or turn the
2 financing to solve the problem. Because this will
3 come up again.

4 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Do you think
5 that every affordable hosing unit need access to
6 parking? Do you think there's a ratio there?

7 MR. RIVERA: I'm thinking that they should
8 -- everybody may not take advantage of it, but it
9 should be available. I shouldn't be priced out that I
10 can't afford it, because, you know, now I have to park
11 my car on the street, you know. And, I mean, start
12 development -- I understand a lot of people say, well,
13 people don't need cars, but you need to have the
14 choice to have one or not, you now. Even if it's a
15 beat up Hyundai or whatever. You need to have a
16 choice to be able to drive if you want to.

17 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Some way to pick
18 up groceries.

19 MR. RIVERA: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.
22 Thank you, Commissioner.

23 We're going to move right along because we
24 want to make sure that we get to the residents in a
25 reasonable hour.

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1 I'm going to ask Stanton Park. Oh, I'm
2 sorry.

3 Cross examination? Trying to move.

4 Applicant, do you have any cross
5 examination? No. Okay.

6 I'm going to ask Stanton Park if they
7 would come and present their case. Mr. Edwards and
8 Mr. Tallant.

9 Excuse me. How much time are you going to
10 need?

11 MR. TALLANT: Approximately five minutes
12 each.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Great.

14 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I was going to ask
15 you if you could do it in 10 minutes. Thank you.

16 MR. EDWARDS: We have distributed on
17 Monday copies of our statement, both to the Commission
18 and to the Applicant. I do have additional copies for
19 the audience I'll pass behind me now.

20 There are some photographs in there that
21 may be of interest.

22 My name is Monty Edwards. And together
23 with Mr. Tallant, we serve as co-chairs of the Land-
24 Use Committee of the Stanton Park Neighborhood
25 Association.

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1 Stanton Park Neighborhood Association
2 represents the citizens that live in the area bounded
3 by E. Capitol Street, 10th Street, NE, H Street, NE
4 and Second Street, NE.

5 Our testimony today is in support of the
6 application. I will be presenting specific
7 reservations concerning the manner in which the former
8 chapel and its entrance will be restored and utilized.

9 The original structures on this site were
10 constructed in 1873 as the Convent for the Little
11 Sisters of the Poor and St. Joseph's Home for the
12 Aged.

13 The building that faced H Street consisted
14 of three wings that projected out to H Street and
15 thereby defined two courtyards. They were open to H
16 Street.

17 The main entrance at 220 H Street was
18 located in the courtyard between the two eastern most
19 wings. And if you'll look at attached photo 1, is a
20 photograph circa 1939 of that entrance.
21 Unfortunately, the main entrance below the --

22 Now, let's go to attached photo 2 first.

23 This shows the H Street facade in which
24 you can see the two projecting -- three projecting
25 wings and the two inner courtyards. The entrance to

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1 the chapel was below the cross, which unfortunately in
2 the photograph is obscured by trees so you can't see
3 this ornate entrance.

4 From the entrance one would enter into a
5 vestibule with a formal entrance to the chapel
6 straight ahead and then you could go left or right
7 into the facility.

8 A photograph of that chapel is Photo
9 Number 3. Here you can see the windows facing H
10 Street are on the right-hand side. The chapel
11 entrance, which is a large formal entrance, about two
12 stories high, is on the left of the photograph.

13 Now, if you'll turn back to Photo 2 for
14 just a moment. You can see a horizontal line, which
15 is a shed roof between the fourth and third stories.
16 That defined the vestibule. Unfortunately, when they
17 put the curtain wall across and made the facade flush
18 with H Street, they tore off that additional so the
19 vestibule and the original entrance are now gone.

20 This 1960s construction is what resulted
21 in the present facade that's flush with H Street. And,
22 of course, the loss of the H Street entrance.

23 Now, the developers proposed to remove
24 those courtyard additions and thereby restore the H
25 Street facade to basically its original configuration.

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1 But that will mean without this protection of the
2 vestibule apparently.

3 In the view of SPNA, the Applicant does
4 not propose to provide an H Street entrance from this
5 restored eastern courtyard that formerly was the main
6 entrance to the facility. They do propose an H Street
7 entrance further up on the bridge to this historic
8 structure.

9 We, San Park strongly supports the
10 Applicant's statement that one of the great challenges
11 of this project was to refocus the attention and the
12 connection of this building and the entire square to H
13 Street. That's from the application, page 5 I'm
14 quoting.

15 Stanton park recommends the restoration of
16 the chapel entrance as a functional entrance to H
17 Street to, in fact, provide a significant
18 architectural and practical feature that would refocus
19 attention and the connection of this building to H
20 Street.

21 There's also significant architectural
22 richness to the chapel interior, which in some areas
23 has been covered by the Children's Museum. It was
24 known as the Mexican Room in the Children's Museum.
25 But most of it is basically intact and largely

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1 consistent with the 1939 view shown in Photo 4.

2 Of interest in this photo the priest that
3 is presiding is Monsignor Fulton Sheen who later
4 became Bishop and Archbishop Fulton Sheen.

5 During the operation of the Children's
6 Museum, this room was used for community and public
7 meetings including San Park's Annual Dinners. The
8 chapel interior is a space well known and loved by the
9 community. Stanton Park has suggested that the chapel
10 interior be restored and the possibility of some form
11 of public use be pursued, rather than converting it to
12 private residential use, which would mean that the
13 public would no longer have access to the
14 architectural richness.

15 In preparing for this hearing, I met with
16 the Little Sisters of the Poor. They are now located
17 up on Harwood Street and described Stanton Park's
18 interest in maintaining public access to the chapel.
19 Their response was, how about a church?

20 Other options that would permit public
21 access might be a restaurant. But Stanton Park
22 understands that the developer would prefer no
23 commercial use on this project.

24 A last and minimal solution would be to
25 use a part of the chapel appropriately restored as the

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1 vestibule for the restored entrance on H Street.

2 Under Section 2403.9D of the zoning
3 regulations, historic preservation and restoration are
4 considered to be public benefits and project
5 amenities. The principal project amenity that is
6 proposed is stated at page 12 of the application. The
7 Applicant will be able to rehabilitate and restore the
8 historically significant portion of the building.

9 The adaptive reuse of the structure for
10 residential purpose is a significant project amenity.

11 Note that in this quotation I've just
12 read, the Applicant does not claim this to be a public
13 benefit. Stanton Park urges restoration of the chapel
14 entrance and at least a portion of the chapel interior
15 in a manner that will permit some degree of public
16 access to provide a significant public benefit.

17 Thank you.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Proceed.

19 MR. TALLANT: Hi. I'll try to be as quick
20 as I can.

21 I want to start by thanking Abdo
22 Development for bringing this project to my
23 neighborhood. I live about 150 feet south of this
24 project. And I'm just pleased as I can be over all
25 having done this project in my neighborhood.

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1 We're very much in support of this project
2 and certainly want to see it go forward as rapidly as
3 possible.

4 The issues that we have brought to Abdo
5 over the course of the development, things about the
6 height of the building at Third and I, they were very
7 responsive to us. I think that the solution they've
8 come up satisfies our concerns in that regard.

9 So, by and large, the only issue that we
10 have outstanding has to do with the exterior
11 restoration of the original structure. And there it's
12 kind of a difficult question because this is a
13 building that was built not all at once, but over a
14 period of time. So, the question comes in restore it
15 to when? Do we restore it to 1870? Do we restore it
16 to 1900? To 1930? You know, just what is the period
17 of significance? What are we going to try to bring it
18 back to?

19 Mr. Abdo has repeatedly stressed to me
20 that as they do the demolition, that they will be
21 refining their restoration proposal. And I have a lot
22 of faith that he will, in fact, do that.

23 But on the issue of an entrance where the
24 chapel entrance was, we haven't come to an agreement
25 there of whether or not that is something they will

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1 pursue and do want to hear from them on that and how
2 we're going to resolve that issue.

3 The other issues that we have are sort of
4 the normal things you would expect for a building of
5 this scale. Truck transportation for construction,
6 where are the workers going to park, you know, what is
7 the staging area for a project that's going to be
8 built all at once that is going to consume the entire
9 square all at one time. And there's no place to put
10 stuff when you dig this big hole that takes up the
11 whole square.

12 So, how are we going to bring this project
13 into our neighborhood in a way that doesn't make our
14 lives miserable for the year and a half, two years?
15 What is that construction period? You know, it's
16 going to be a sizeable chunk of time.

17 I do believe that we will continue to have
18 a very good working relationship with Abdo and that we
19 will resolve these things as we go along.

20 What I do suggest, what San Park does
21 suggest is a architectural historian be engaged to
22 determine the appropriateness of the renovation of the
23 exterior of the historic structure in terms of
24 determining what is the most important period of
25 significance? Whether the additions that Abdo is

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1 proposing, such as the balconies, on H Street. They
2 have balconies on the facade.

3 We found no evidence that those balconies
4 ever existing historically. They might be a good
5 idea, but because this project is not going through an
6 historic preservation review, but its claim is
7 historic preservation as its primary amenity, you
8 know, we don't have the oversight on historic
9 preservation that we would weren't we going through
10 that process.

11 So, we have to look in the PUD process to
12 implement historic controls.

13 So, we're looking for you all to do that.

14 The other thing that we would want to echo
15 is, I believe, the ANC mentioned that they would like
16 to have sort of a community meeting, regularly monthly
17 meeting with Abdo to review any problems. You know, I
18 think it's a fairly normal procedure on a project of
19 this size. And they've indicated that that would be
20 acceptable.

21 That's it. I hope that we'll move forward
22 with project as rapidly as possible.

23 Thank you.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. Thank you
25 both for your comment.

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1 Colleagues, any questions?

2 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I'm curious.

3 The building is not designated a landmark.

4 Is that correct?

5 MR. TALLANT: That is correct.

6 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: And there's no
7 process underway to get it designated a landmark?

8 MR. TALLANT: There is no landmark pending
9 and it's unlikely that there would be.

10 I think that Mr. Abdo has been very
11 knowledgeable of the land-marking process and has
12 designed a project that is largely responsive to that
13 potential.

14 So, I think that but for the kind of
15 project they brought to the community, there would
16 have been an effort to landmark all or portion of this
17 building. But it's because we're already getting so
18 much of what we would have wanted through a land-
19 marking process, there was no need to landmark it.

20 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: What is the
21 reaction to the balconies that face H Street? I'm
22 assuming the ones that face the courtyard aren't an
23 issue because they're not visible from the public
24 right-a-way?

25 MR. TALLANT: That's correct.

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1 And it's not so much an issue whether or
2 not the balconies are advisable. It's more a matter
3 of, if we're stating that we're going to be restoring
4 the original architectural fabric, then are we doing
5 that or are we not doing that? And where are we doing
6 it and where are we not doing it?

7 And where do we make the decision of what
8 is an appropriate non-historical additional and what
9 is an appropriate historical fabric that is not going
10 to be restored such as the chapel entrance. Those
11 kinds of issues.

12 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: So, you haven't
13 reached a resolution on that with your discussion with
14 the Applicant?

15 MR. TALLANT: The research that we've done
16 is not conclusive and I think it's partly because the
17 building was built over a period of time. So, it
18 becomes a question of what date do you look at?

19 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: So, I'm assuming
20 that things that are windows now are becoming doors?
21 Is that one of the things you're suggesting with the
22 balconies?

23 MR. TALLANT: Yes. One of the other
24 speakers here tonight is probably far more
25 knowledgeable of historic structures than I am. And

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1 one of the things that he has told me and that's Pat
2 Lolly, is that these buildings were not one-off
3 buildings. That when the Catholic Diocese built these
4 types of buildings, they essentially went to their
5 pattern book and they picked, you know, floor plan
6 building 1B and that's what they built. Maybe they
7 didn't build it all at once, but they went to sort of
8 a Catholic architecture pattern book and did that.

9 So, it's not that we're dealing with a
10 building that was unique in its day. It's one that is
11 representative of a type of architecture that was
12 built in the late 1800s. So, I think there are
13 examples, even if we can't document exactly what this
14 particular building looked like, on a particular date,
15 that there are other examples that we can look to to
16 sort of document what would have been an appropriate
17 architectural statement.

18 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other questions,
20 colleagues?

21 Okay. Moving right along.

22 Does the Applicant have any cross
23 examination or do you just hold your seat?

24 Does the ANC have any cross examination?

25 MR. RIVERA: Anthony Rivera.

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1 The question is have for Stanton Park is
2 that I want to know their actual boundaries on the
3 organization. Where do they go, the boundaries?

4 MR. TALLANT: Our northern boundary would
5 be H Street. So, this building is directly across H
6 Street from our northern boundary.

7 MR. RIVERA: To my knowledge, near
8 northeast goes all the way to G Street. A Street,
9 excuse me. And the reason why I bring this issue up
10 is that north of H Street has been like a no man's
11 zone. Okay. And anytime we have -- I live north of H
12 Street. Anytime we have any problems, I don't hear
13 from anybody and then all of a sudden we have a
14 development, we have BP try to put up a gas station.
15 Now we got the Children's Museum. And then I see
16 someone come in --

17 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Are you making a
18 point? This is the time where you're getting to your
19 question.

20 I'm allowing you a little flexibility
21 until you get to your question.

22 MR. RIVERA: Okay.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: We don't want to get
24 into a turf issue here.

25 MR. RIVERA: I understand. All I'm asking

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1 is why do they have a big concern about, and it's not
2 an historic project?

3 MR. TALLANT: With all due respect, I have
4 been fairly active in near northeast for the last
5 several years. And the specific issue of BT, I led
6 the project on that for a number of years. So, to say
7 that Stanton Park doesn't care about what happens.
8 This isn't a discussion we should be having here.
9 But, to say that Stanton Park does not care about what
10 happens on H Street and north of H Street is a little
11 disingenuous.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Has your question
13 been answered? Thank you.

14 MR. RIVERA: No. The question was asking
15 is, I mean, why are they bringing up the issue of
16 historic when it's not historic? That was the
17 question I asked.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

19 MR. RIVERA: I didn't ask - -I mean, the
20 fence I can understand. But I mean I been there and
21 I've seen what's happening.

22 MR. TALLANT: Well, the developer is
23 claiming the restoration of the historic structure as
24 a principal project amenity. So, it think that that's
25 a very valid topic for discussion.

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1 I mean, that is one of the things they
2 have put front and center as their amenity.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: And at the proper
4 time when we discuss it, the Commission will consider
5 that. We will deal with that. And we've heard
6 everyone loud and clear. Okay.

7 Thank you.

8 Let's see if we can move a little faster
9 here.

10 What I want to do. I have a list in front
11 of me. I'm going to ask for the organizations in
12 support of it first. It seems as though in perusing
13 the list, every organization has two people to come
14 down. So, I'm going to call the organization and one
15 person will get five minutes. You don't have to use
16 it all. And one person will get three minutes. You
17 don't have to use all that either.

18 And let me just ask. H Street -- it says
19 H Street Main Street. They are the two representative
20 who can come first.

21 While they're on their way, I'm going to
22 ask Potomac Development Corporation if they can come
23 also. They have two representatives. If you only
24 want one, that will be fine too. However you want to
25 work it. But I don't want to disenfranchise anyone.

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1 Everybody is going to have an opportunity. So, I just
2 said that just in case one person can cover your
3 comments.

4 And also, where's Potomac Development
5 Corporation? Are they at the table? They left?
6 Sorry. Okay. Well, we have their submittal.

7 Let me ask Commissioner -- let me ask
8 Commissioner Pernell to come forward. And I forgot
9 which organization he's representing. I know it's an
10 organization.

11 And I'm going to ask that the National
12 Children's Museum stand ready and also Local
13 Initiative Support corporation stand ready.

14 Okay. If you start -- H Street.

15 MR. DYSON: Yes.

16 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Main Street.

17 MR. DYSON: My name is Derek Dyson.

18 I'm the secretary for H Street/Main
19 Street. I'm going to be speaking on behalf of H
20 Street/Main Street and I won't take five minutes.

21 I've provided the Commission with a copy
22 of our statement and I'm not going to repeat that
23 because I think that it can be applied to the record
24 without having to go and having to re-read that.

25 I did want to point out a couple of

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1 significant points with respect to H Street/Main
2 Street's relationship with Abdo. Abdo has pointed out
3 up front that they have offered to make a contribution
4 to H Street/Main Street after they receive their
5 building permit. And H Street/Main Street appreciate
6 that.

7 They did that without us asking for it and
8 they did that because, again, they recognized the
9 important of H Street/Main Street.

10 One other aspect of this is we, as H
11 Street/Main Street came in as pointed out in the
12 chart, kind of later in the process with some of the
13 other groups they had met with but I will say this
14 that the plan that they are proposed does fit within
15 the western corridor for the H Street development
16 plan. So, street development plan.

17 So, it was impressive to us when they came
18 to us that they kept that in mind and they recognized
19 the significance of just having residential units, no
20 retail in this building to assist the retail
21 businesses along the H Street corridor. And we are
22 very impressed with that and we are very impressed
23 with the project. And we support it as a gateway to
24 all of H Street because it does -- it is very
25 important to have this particular project as that

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1 gateway to develop that transition as Mr. Jeffries had
2 mentioned.

3 So, I'm going to stop there and see if
4 anybody had any questions, but I would just rely again
5 on the statement that we have provided to you.

6 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

7 We're going to ask our questions at the
8 end if you can just hold your seat.

9 Next.

10 MR. DANAHER: My name is Brendan Danaher.
11 I'm on the Board of H Street/Main Street as well.

12 Derek covered pretty much everything and
13 in light of the time, I'll be very quick.

14 We support the Abdo project because, you
15 know, we support first the preservation based
16 approach. We commend his enhancements to the street
17 scape. We support the density and the height of the
18 project. We support the affordable housing aspect and
19 we support the residential nature of the project when
20 it could have been commercial.

21 And we are also deeply supportive of the
22 fact that the project is in alignment with both the
23 DDOT plan and the OP plan that the residents and the
24 District government put in thousands of hours on.

25 Thank you.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

2 Let me just interrupt. Mr. Salim, did you
3 want to hear what -- okay, good. I want to make sure
4 we're fair and give everybody the opportunity.
5 Because I appreciate everyone sitting here and being
6 patient.

7 Commissioner Pernell.

8 MR. PERNELL: Good evening.

9 My name is Commissioner Daniel Pernell and
10 I am a member of the Near Northeast Citizens Against
11 Crime and Drugs.

12 Our boundaries are from the north of
13 Florida Avenue to south of A Street and from the west
14 up North Capitol to east of 15th and Bladensburg Road
15 and we have been since 1985 and we are in the D.C.
16 Register of boundaries.

17 I am here on behalf of Ms. Loree Murray.
18 That's L-O-R-E-E M-U-R-R-A-Y, who is the founder and
19 president and we will be celebrating our 20th
20 anniversary April 3rd, 2005.

21 Our civil group was based on mostly crime
22 prevention. We are the only civic group that has that
23 registration and we've been dealing with the crimes in
24 the area, if you remember Ratha Edmond and a number of
25 hard-core criminals that we helped along with the U.S.

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1 attorney to get rid of in our community.

2 I'm here to say that Near Northeast
3 supports the Abdo 0422 project PUD at the Capital
4 Children's Museum and Ms. Murray bases this on the
5 contingency that Abdo Development keep their promise.

6 And their promise is to include the square footage of
7 set-aside housing for low income on affordable housing
8 for a minimum of 20,000 square feet to at least 15
9 percent of that development resident square foot for
10 the entire site.

11 Housing must insure they are affordable
12 over a period of time to be reviewed and affirmed by
13 the ANC, which is the ANC Single Member District, Mr.

14 Anthony Rivera, who will be setting up an affirmative
15 action committee outreach, which would include a
16 member from Stanton Park, a couple members from the
17 Housing Development Corporation and also from Abdo who
18 will have members sitting on it and also residents
19 from the area.

20 The areas that we spoke of talking about
21 the traffic on Second Street. Second Street, we have
22 had the same plan we did with Station Place and we
23 would also provide that information to that advisory
24 panel that we will keep that same direction of that
25 traffic because I sit right on Second Street. I'm on

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1 Third and I'm a half a block away. And so I'm very
2 concerned about the traffic on that area.

3 There are a number of things, and we also
4 -- we need to support a community development
5 corporation such as the H Street CDC to be a part of
6 this, because they are the only ones in the area that
7 has the experience with affordable housing.

8 These individuals who are sitting here
9 representing H Street/Main Street. I've been on H
10 Street/Main Street for 35 years and I have not seen
11 these people. These people have not been inclusive to
12 the ANC. They have not made any presentation as of
13 now, since they've been established to the ANC or by
14 the H Street Merchants Association. And this is one
15 great concern that the Near Northeast citizens had in
16 the area that these people are not being inclusive to
17 everyone in the Near -- we never know when they're
18 having a meeting. Most meetings they have has been in
19 the dark and not to the public. There's no e-mail of
20 their meetings to the ANC or the Single Member or the
21 civic lady in the area, Ms. Lorrie Murray.

22 So, these are the great concerns that we
23 have in the area. But, we're willing to work together
24 and move along and support Mr. Jim Abdo, who has been
25 very friendly to the community, who has answered all

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1 our questions, both privately and publicly before the
2 ANC and the civic group in the area.

3 And so I move to say that we are satisfied
4 with the parking arrangement there. We are not
5 satisfied with the cars that they're going to have as
6 business there. The ZipCars, I believe they are,
7 because we don't want that area to be overflow with
8 commercial. Now, if they're using the Second Street
9 for that entrance of those cars, we're satisfied with
10 that, which they can take Second Street, since it's a
11 narrow street when it gets to L, which is where I'm
12 between L and M. It becomes very narrow. It's one
13 lane. And they cannot make a left there and go
14 underneath the bridge where the near subway station,
15 because they may hit the top of the bridge. So, they
16 would have to make a right and go out M Street to
17 Florida.

18 They can take a left on Third to Florida
19 and then hit New York one block away. Or they can
20 take the route of straight out east on M Street and go
21 narrow right into Florida Avenue and go out to
22 Bladensburg Road.

23 So, we are in support of that and I move
24 to say that we are in support of Mr. Abdo and I
25 appreciate him coming to us.

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1 The last concern that we have is that we
2 would like to know, Ms. Murray personally, because a
3 couple of members of her family had to move out of the
4 area because of the developers on H Street had
5 pressured them out because they are looking for the
6 high bidder for their property. And they are looking
7 for affordable housing. They've been residents -- Ms.
8 Murray as had about 75 years in the community and her
9 family members have about 35, about the same time I've
10 been here. And they looking for affordable housing.

11 We hope that this comes out of the Capital
12 Children's Museum, because that's not the only area.
13 We have 301 L Street. Mr. Abdo has been meeting with
14 us and been very positive with us and we've been very
15 satisfied. And also 301, which is owned by Adrian
16 Washington, who is supposed to be coming to us
17 concerning his development there.

18 So -- and also the Jamal Brothers at M and
19 Third Street concerning the Oralina Arena which we
20 worked on that since 1982.

21 So, we've had some great progress and we
22 will be announcing those at our April 3rd meeting of
23 -- plus the New York/Florida Avenue subway.

24 Thank you.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

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1 I would ask my colleagues. Thank you all
2 for your testimony.

3 Do you have any questions for this panel?

4 Okay. Thank you.

5 Do anybody -- I'm going to do it like this
6 to save time. It's getting late and I'm getting all
7 these mixed signals from left to right and up top and
8 I appreciate it.

9 Anybody have any cross for that panel?

10 Ms. Prince? The ANC? Stanton park?

11 Thank you. And that's just going to be
12 the norm from now on. Okay. But I will call for it.

13 Thank you.

14 I'm going to ask National Children's
15 Museum and also former deputy mayor, Eric Price.

16 Once the deputy mayor, always the deputy
17 mayor, who is representing our list.

18 MS. SOUTHERN: Good evening. My name is
19 Kathy Dwyer Southern. I'm the president and CEO of
20 the National Children's Museum. And I'm joined this
21 evening by Ross Hechinger, who is the Chairman of the
22 Board. We are here to testify in support of the Abdo
23 Development Plan.

24 As Councilwoman Ambrose mentioned earlier
25 this evening, as one of our Board members, the Capital

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1 Children's Museum has been at this property for over
2 30 days. And we sold the property to Jim last year as
3 we identified a new home in L'Enfant Plaza.

4 Throughout our 30 years of history, we've
5 served over 150,000 kids year in and year out,
6 children of families who have visited the museum.

7 Washington families, many Washington
8 families have grown up with the museum and there are
9 very many wonderful experiences and memories
10 associated with this site.

11 We were an active member of the H Street
12 community as well, hosting community meeting, actively
13 participating in the development of the H Street plan
14 and being a special place for the kids of our
15 community.

16 We care deeply about the museum. Our
17 school is in the surrounding property and did our best
18 to maintain and support it while our visitors were
19 having a great museum experience.

20 I'm speaking tonight in support of the
21 Abdo plan because we know this developer shares our
22 perspective, our values and our respect for this
23 property. We sold the property to Jim Abdo for this
24 very same set of reasons.

25 This is a neighborhood we've cared about

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1 and worked hard in for over 30 years. And we know
2 that Jim will carry on this tradition of deep and full
3 community involvement, which certainly has been
4 demonstrated this evening and a real respect for the
5 neighborhood and the neighbors.

6 In our experience, Jim is a man who truly
7 listens, truly really works with the community and
8 keeps his word. He has been a true partner with us
9 and will keep what is the best for the area always in
10 focus.

11 He also shares with us a well-documented
12 sensitivity for historic structure and areas. The
13 site houses several truly beautiful buildings,
14 beautiful and significant structures, which we have
15 always loved and honored.

16 We know that Jim will continue this
17 respect for the property and the plan that you have
18 before you, we feel is an excellent demonstration of
19 his concern in this historic area.

20 At closing with Jim last year, I know the
21 museum board and staff felt that this would be, and
22 Sharon Ambrose mentioned this this evening, a win-win-
23 win for us all. A win for the neighborhood because we
24 have brought in an excellent and sensitive developer
25 who was already well aligned with the thinking of the

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1 area and I want to return to the H Street plan as an
2 important demonstration in that area.

3 A win for the museum because the place we
4 have honored and called home for over 30 years with
5 thousands of kids from this community as a part of
6 that experience, will be thoughtfully and sensitively
7 developed and brought to life new and we think very
8 exciting in importance ways.

9 And finally a win for the city as the site
10 provides new housing opportunities and helps launch
11 the redevelopment of the H Street corridor, which we
12 participated actively in that development of the plan.

13 We fully and wholeheartedly support the
14 Abdo plan and I'd now like to turn to Ross Hechinger
15 for additional comments.

16 MR. HECHINGER: I will be brief and I just
17 wanted to express my gratitude to the Commission for
18 hearing our testimony today.

19 I've been involved with the National
20 Children's Museum, formerly the Capital Children's
21 Museum, for 20 years and have been a lifetime
22 Washingtonian and I share the vision that Jim has in
23 terms of the dedication to the city.

24 We chose Abdo Development as the purchaser
25 of the property on H Street because we believe that he

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1 and his company would develop a plan that would work
2 best for the neighborhood and the community and, of
3 course, our former home as a children's museum. And
4 I'd just like to say, the National Children's Museum
5 is the co-applicant in this process and we have been
6 working closely together with Abdo Development to see
7 this application successfully through the zoning
8 approval process.

9 And I'd just like to emphasize the timing
10 is very important on this spectacular project which
11 we've all seen today. And I want to strongly urge the
12 Commission to approve this application as quickly as
13 possible.

14 Thank you very much.

15 MR. PRICE: Good evening. My name is Eric
16 Price. I thank you for allowing me to testify today.

17 I am the Senior Vice President for
18 Neighborhood markets for the Local Initiatives Support
19 Corporation. I'm here tonight to provide our support
20 for this application.

21 LISC is the largest community development
22 organization in the nation. We provide about \$700
23 million a year in the projects, with 38 offices
24 throughout the country. And we work primarily with
25 CDCs and nonprofits to build neighborhood. And so

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1 we're very comfortable supporting this application,
2 because we think it's both consistent with the
3 neighborhood and that the project itself is going to
4 be a catalyst for further economic development.

5 I also come tonight. I was a deputy mayor
6 in Washington, D.C., for economic development for the
7 last five years up until December of last year and was
8 involved in come of planning activities that actually
9 have occurred along that corridor. And I want to just
10 offer a few comments to some of the comments that I've
11 heard here tonight very quickly.

12 First of all, Commissioner Jeffries
13 brought up the issue of affordable housing and looking
14 at different income levels in the projects that he had
15 been involved with.

16 I was involved with those same projects.
17 And I don't know one of them that didn't have some
18 form of subsidy, either the land write-down, taxes and
19 bond financing, income tax credit, CDBG or something
20 wasn't involved to bring the income level to the
21 various levels that he's talking about.

22 Also in the projects that he was talking
23 about, there was a competition. In order to win the
24 competition you had to come in and say, I'm going to
25 make "X" affordability to when some developers did it.

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1 In this case we find with the Abdo project there is
2 no competition. And I don't know of one case of any
3 project I've seen where a developer has gone out and
4 paid market rate for the land and then worked on the
5 issue of affordability with the community. I don't
6 know one case.

7 And, in fact, in the five years of being
8 deputy mayor I approved about 120 residential
9 projects. I don't recall one of those projects that
10 were market-rate driven where the developer came in on
11 their own and basically said -- and worked with the
12 community and said, I'm going to provide an
13 affordability component to it.

14 And let's just talk for a minute and I'll
15 e very quickly about that affordability component.

16 I hear people, they kind of say, \$60,000,
17 \$70,000 that's a lot of money. We're talking about a
18 family of four. We're talking about two people making
19 \$30,000. \$35,000. We're talking about the school
20 teacher. We're talking about the office worker.
21 We're not talking about one person making \$70,000 when
22 we talk about this median income. It's for a family
23 of four when we're talking about that. And I think we
24 should keep that in mind.

25 The city provides subsidies for housing

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1 production trust funds, CBDG, home, TIFF. They all go
2 to very, very low income -- for the most part, very,
3 very low income. May not be enough and I'm not going
4 to argue that, whether or not we put enough into that,
5 but that's where those resources go.

6 Where you don't see the subsidy is for the
7 working family in this city. And that's where there
8 is a real gap. And so I'm very pleased to support a
9 project like this where the private sector, the
10 private developer has come in and done -- we have
11 done, I think, at last in the time I was, we didn't do
12 enough of, but he came in without the competition,
13 without the write-down, without the subsidy and did it
14 anyway.

15 Finally, and I'll conclude on this. I
16 could go on a little bit more, but I would like to
17 conclude that in my position as deputy mayor, I was
18 often asked by developers to come down to this
19 committee, to call you, to badger you. I beat up
20 Ellen a few times, for their particular project. None
21 of you have ever seen me down here to do any of that.

22 It was not (a) appropriate for me to do that. And I
23 also never wanted to get into having to choose which
24 project we would support or not support or anything
25 like that. You're an independent entity.

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1 If I would have ever chosen a project to
2 do that, it would have been a project like this. It
3 would have been a project that I think on its merits
4 just alone, stand alone, make it something that we
5 want to do in this city. I would have done it because
6 I think it's going to be a catalyst for the other
7 development along that corridor.

8 We are putting all kind of private sector
9 resources into that corridor. We're doing home again,
10 vacant and abandoned properties. We're doing Restore
11 D.C. My office actually started that program and
12 focus particularly on H Street to make it happen. But
13 you have to have that private sector partner.

14 And I just really want to come back to
15 some point that I think Council Member Ambrose made
16 and it's about the developer himself, about his
17 integrity, his credibility, his willingness to carry
18 through on this and make this happen. And I think you
19 have that private sector partner. We have a great
20 opportunity here to really jump start the development
21 on the corridor.

22 And, again, I just tonight wanted to urge
23 you to support his project.

24 Thank you.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Thank

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1 you.

2 If you all could hold your seat.

3 First, do we have any questions?

4 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Yes. Actually I
5 do.

6 I'm trying to understand this.

7 The Children's Museum has sold the
8 property to Abdo. Why are you a co-applicant on this
9 PUD?

10 MR. HECHINGER: As part of the purchase
11 agreement, there is an opportunity for there to be
12 additional support for the National Children's Museum
13 that is going into L'Enfant Plaza. The purchase price
14 of the museum property, the total proceeds of that are
15 going back into D.C. and to the National Children's
16 Museum on L'Enfant Plaza. So, we want to support any
17 ability for there to be improvements to this property
18 for that purpose.

19 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Any other questions?

21 Okay. Cross examination? Ms. Prince?
22 ANC? Stanton Park? Okay. All right. Thank you.

23 Thank you all. Thank you for your
24 testimony.

25 Okay. Sally Donner. And if I'm

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1 mispronouncing it, forgive me. Sally Donner? H
2 Street CDC.

3 Can you turn your microphone?

4 MR. PERNELL: On behalf of Ms. Sally
5 Donner, she concurred that the H Street CDC should be
6 a part of this PUD in the sense that they have
7 experience in affordable housing in the area of Near
8 Northeast.

9 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

10 I believe Skip Coburn was with Council
11 Member Ambrose. Okay.

12 Moving right along.

13 I have two more groups. Cheryl Cort of
14 WRN with two question marks. I'm not sure what that
15 means. So, she can explain.

16 MS. SCHELLIN: I wasn't sure whether she
17 -- what the organization was that she was
18 representing?

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. And also Mr.
20 David Burnhart from Luna Laundromat. I think we
21 qualified as an organization.

22 Mr. Burnhart had to leave. Okay.

23 So, Ms. Cort, then we'll go straight to
24 the residents.

25 MS. CORT: Thank you. My name is Cheryl

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1 Cort. I am the Executive Director of the Washington
2 Regional Network for Liveable Communities.

3 We are a Washington based, nonprofit
4 organization promoting the regional vision of the
5 network of diverse walkable communities linked by
6 transit, graced by parks and surrounded by farms and
7 forests with the District of Columbia as the hub.

8 Through education outreach and policy
9 advocacy, WRN promotes transportation and investment
10 land-use policies and neighborhood designs that
11 enhance existing communities and protect the
12 environment.

13 We're particularly concerned that
14 redevelopment in urban communities is inclusive,
15 promoting diverse housing choices so that people of
16 all incomes can live in convenient, walkable
17 neighborhoods near transit and jobs.

18 Given our commitment to quality transit
19 oriented development, WRN supports the proposed
20 project at the Capital Children's Museum site.

21 In fact, this project is an exemplary
22 redevelopment project in many ways. We believe that
23 this project will contribute greatly to the quality of
24 life for both the surrounding community and for the
25 region.

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1 We concur with the support that we've
2 heard about from the D.C. Office of Planning and many
3 community members and groups. This project is a
4 substantial contribution to transit accessible housing
5 opportunities in the neighborhood, city and region.
6 It's attractive urban design, pedestrian scale and
7 street orientation contributes greatly to the creation
8 of successful walkable neighborhoods, close to Metro
9 Rail and other transit services.

10 New residents in street oriented buildings
11 will bring greater safety to the area by providing
12 more eyes on the street and by supplying more walk-in
13 customers to near-by stores and transit services in
14 the area.

15 By providing a substantial number of new
16 homes close to a major job center, the project reduces
17 regional vehicle miles traveled, air pollution and
18 traffic congestion. The close proximity of homes,
19 jobs and retail along with the street scape
20 improvements of pedestrian and bicycle connections not
21 only create a safer and more inviting pedestrian
22 environment, they also support the region's transit
23 byte by generating of peak transit trips and reverse
24 commute trips.

25 Regarding the affordable housing element,

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1 while we anxiously await the Zoning Commission to take
2 up the proposed zoning text amendment to create a
3 mandatory inclusionary zoning policy for the city, we
4 appreciate the developer's willingness to voluntarily
5 offer a sizeable amount of the low-market rate housing
6 as a part of this project, although we would like to
7 see the income target lowered at about 60 percent of
8 the area median income.

9 Regarding parking, we would ask that a
10 reduction to the proposed over one-to-one parking
11 ration be encouraged. This prime location, accessible
12 to job, transit, stores and services greatly reduces
13 the need to own a car. Indeed, this census track --
14 in this census track, 26 percent of owners and 50
15 percent of renter households do not own a car.

16 Instead of offering parking far above
17 zoning regulations and above current car ownership
18 rates in this area, we ask that alternatives to car
19 ownership be subsidized rather than potentially
20 subsidizing parking. We suggest reducing the parking
21 ratio closer to zoning code or current car ownership
22 rates and use some of the savings from this to
23 subsidize ZipCar and FlexCar, transit passes and lower
24 prices for the affordable housing units. .

25 Parking costs are tremendous and

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1 underground parking spaces cost \$20,000 or more. I
2 would just like to say that in terms of the suggestion
3 of an affordable parking fund, I believe, I would
4 suggest that we have an affordable transportation
5 fund, since so many people can save a tremendous
6 amount of money on travel costs by not owning a car
7 and relying on all of the transit opportunities and
8 walking opportunities in this neighborhood. That
9 money can be put into home ownership, rather into a
10 car ownership and the cost of car storage.

11 This site is highly suited to offer this
12 kind of travel cost savings from reduced parking. And
13 at a minimum we ask that all of the parking be sold
14 separately from housing, so that parking costs are not
15 being subsidized by those who are not buying a parking
16 space.

17 Car-less households will be attracted to
18 this convenient location because they can save the
19 cost of owning and storing a car and put that money
20 into a home.

21 We would just like to conclude saying
22 that, you know, representing the smart growth
23 environmental activists who are promoting smart
24 growth, this is an important project for creating
25 walkable, transient oriented neighborhoods. And as

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1 our region grows, we need to direct more growth to
2 create lively, active, urban areas while protecting
3 the rural reaches of our region. And that this
4 proposal substantially contributes to that effort.

5 Thanks for the opportunity to testify.

6 I've also actually clipped onto my
7 testimony a brief paper we did called Neighborhood
8 parking Solutions, How to Manage Parking to Create
9 Better Communities, Affordable Housing and Greater
10 Access.

11 Thank you.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you, Ms.
13 Cort.

14 Colleagues, any questions?

15 Cross examination, Ms. Prince? ANC?
16 Stanton Park?

17 Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

18 I believe I have all the organizations
19 that support. Did I admit any organizations in
20 support?

21 Seeing none.

22 Residents in support? Well, persons in
23 support. I'm going to try to get four at the table.
24 Todd Davis, Richard Layman, Alan Kimber and Robert
25 Davis.

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1 And I'm going to ask the last person I
2 have before I call for persons in -- the last person
3 is Ms. Patrick Lolly. Oh, Patrick Lolly to be ready.

4 Okay. Excuse me for saying Ms. I'm
5 sorry.

6 Mr. Davis, you may begin. Turn your mike
7 on and identify yourself and begin your testimony.

8 MR. DAVIS: My name is Todd Davis.

9 I live at 730 Fourth Street, which is
10 right near the corner of Fourth and H Street, NE.

11 First, I'd like to thank you for giving me
12 the opportunity to speak this evening. I want to ask
13 thank the city for their dedication to the
14 revitalization of H Street.

15 I think the best way that we as a city
16 will revitalize H Street is by merging Government
17 resources with private investment. That's why I'm
18 before you this evening. I'd like to ask that you
19 support the investment and development of the
20 Children's Museum site by the Abdo Corporation.

21 From what I've seen, the Abdo Corporation
22 represents the kind of responsible development we
23 desperately need in our area of the city.

24 In attending the meetings by the Planning
25 Commission, the constant back drop of those meetings

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1 was encouraging that the western gateway from North
2 Capitol to Seventh Street, NE, be reserved as mainly
3 residential development. This is consistent with
4 their suggestion for that area.

5 I would also like to point out that during
6 this whole process, the Abdo Development Corporation
7 made a concerted effort to reach out to the community.

8 I mean granted Mr. Abdo did not knock on my door and
9 tell me about the meetings, but it was easy for me to
10 find out when the meetings were. I also contacted
11 them and asked them for a little more information. At
12 that time, they sent me a 75-page full color book,
13 which I think is the same book that's in front of you
14 right now.

15 They even went through the effort to do a
16 shadow study, which is, I guess, requested by you.
17 The Abdo Corp will bring a much needed or many stores
18 and restaurants to our neighborhood which will not
19 only be used by the residents of their project, but
20 also by the residents that are there now.

21 So, as a resident homeowner, investor and
22 taxpayer in D.C., I would ask that you support their
23 request for Planned Unit Development here this
24 evening.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

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1 Next? Mr. Layman.

2 MR. LAYMAN: Good evening. I'm Richard
3 Layman. I've lived in the neighborhood and the city
4 for more than 15 years. I've been a key participant
5 in many of the successful neighborhood revitalization
6 efforts over the past few years, including managing a
7 historic preservation study, serving as one of the
8 leaders of the effort to create H Street/Main Street
9 and raising with others more than a million dollars
10 for neighborhood revitalization activities.

11 I am a member of the Near Northeast
12 Citizens. I'm also a community member of the ANC
13 Planning and Zoning committee.

14 The testimony is mine, but it does reflect
15 the sentiments of many.

16 I'm going to skip through this. You have
17 the written testimony.

18 We're all well aware of the mayor's
19 initiatives to attract 100,000 new residents to the
20 city. And it's essential to do so to build the
21 revenue and social capital base for the city. It's
22 particularly important in the H Street corridor which
23 needs residents, as everyone else has testified --
24 more residents to attract to our commercial district
25 the kinds of businesses the community says it wants,

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1 the kinds of businesses that other neighborhoods take
2 for granted.

3 I favor this project for many reasons. It
4 brings more residents to the neighborhood, which will
5 support the revitalization in the commercial corridor.

6 It brings new housing to the neighborhood without the
7 loss of any current units. It provides additional
8 housing supply, which can reduce overall displacement
9 pressures in the great neighborhood, which no one has
10 discussed. And there are about 1,700 units north of H
11 Street. This would add almost a third and would have
12 to reduce displacement pressures.

13 It provides more units of affordable
14 housing compared to any other unsubsidized housing
15 development in the city in advance of any inclusionary
16 zoning requirements that the Zoning Commission may
17 enact. And as Cheryl Cort testified way better than I
18 could, it supports the District governments, transit-
19 oriented development initiatives by providing high
20 density housing close to Union Station, housing that
21 encourages transit use rather than automobile use, and
22 this should appeal to all residents regardless of
23 income.

24 Also, it restores the distinctive facade
25 of the original Little Sisters of Poor Convent with

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1 the provisos our colleagues at Stanton Park raised to
2 the quality level of the Secretary of Interior
3 standards for rehabilitating historic buildings, even
4 though the corporation is not required to meet these
5 standards. Because while eligible, and that's an
6 important point, the building -- and I would point out
7 to my ANC committee colleagues, could be nominated in
8 two weeks, if some of us, including me, wanted to do
9 it. It would be very easy to nominate that building
10 to become a historic property.

11 One of the biggest reasons and perhaps the
12 best reason for you to approve this project, which
13 you've already commented on, the care and concern
14 exhibited by the Applicant, is it brings to H Street
15 for the first time a developer and that includes all
16 the developers, including H Street Community
17 Development Corporation, that have been active in the
18 past. For the first time, it brings a developer to
19 the community that consistently cares about quality
20 and preservation.

21 All the new construction on H Street over
22 the last 20 years, including Hechinger Mall, sorry,
23 Mr. Hechinger, is unsympathetic to the architectural
24 character and distinctiveness to the surrounding
25 community. In fact, the lack of sympathy to the

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1 historic character of the neighborhood has probably
2 contributed to the difficulties in revitalizing the
3 neighborhood.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Mr. Layman, let me
5 just say.

6 Normally, when I use the chair here and I
7 usually stop right on the dime, but --

8 MR. LAYMAN: Well, I appreciate your --

9 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: -- the residents have
10 been sitting here --

11 MR. LAYMAN: -- giving me that extra
12 moment and --

13 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me finish my
14 statement. I just want to prod everyone else.

15 The residents have been sitting here all
16 evening, so I'm going to let you continue, but I'm
17 going to ask you to kind of cut it short.

18 Just give your closing.

19 MR. LAYMAN: I don't feel there is
20 anything more to be said than is already in my
21 testimony, which I know due to your diligence, you'll
22 read.

23 Thank you for your forbearance.

24 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you for
25 your comments.

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1 Moving right along.

2 Next, Mr. Kimber, I believe.

3 MR. KIMBER: Yes. Hi. Thank you, Mr.
4 Chair and members of the Commission.

5 My name is Alan Kimber. I live at 228
6 Parkard Street, N.E. I used to tell people I live, if
7 you know where the Children's Museum is, a half block
8 north of that. Well, now I guess I'll be saying, if
9 you know where Senate Square is, I'm a half block
10 north of that.

11 I'm here in my individual capacity. I did
12 run for the ANC, lost by a grand total of 16 votes out
13 of 800 cast. So, I talked to a lot of people in the
14 last little bit including high on the list was what's
15 going on with the Children's Museum.

16 And, yes, so many things have been said
17 and so many things have been entered into the record.

18 Just hitting on a few high points.

19 You couldn't have asked for a higher
20 quality developer to undertake this project, both from
21 commitment to honoring historic nature of the existing
22 buildings and restoring those. And also just the
23 quality of the overall development. You don't have to
24 look too far in any direction in the city to see
25 evidence of that.

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1 You know, overall I think it's a very
2 sensible design and there have been things said about
3 that.

4 A few things that kind of I heard tonight
5 that I'd like to address as a close-in resident.
6 There was some concern bout the parking entrance and
7 that was actually when I first talked to Mr. Abdo and
8 his company. I was very pleased to see where the
9 entrance is going to be because if you were to put an
10 entrance on I Street or an entrance on Third Street,
11 you present, you know, just a terrible impact on the
12 character and quality of the neighborhood the ability
13 of people to walk and move about freely and access the
14 homes that are in the immediate area.

15 I was very pleased to hear Mr. Abdo's
16 early support for making a dedicated space to ZipCar,
17 which if you're not familiar with, they provide
18 rentals on an hourly basis so that individuals can
19 have less of a need for a car and address some of the
20 parking pressures and don't result in all kinds of
21 commercial use, but really encourage smart living and
22 the ability to do without a car for the most part.

23 If I can specifically address the
24 suggestion to lower the parking, the number of parking
25 spots. As a resident, I would be strongly against

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1 that. Yes. I think going higher than one-to-one
2 would be bad because then you would be encouraging
3 automobile use and congestion and etcetera. But if
4 you've got a household with two adults, you know.
5 Actually, my wife and I have one car and I think we do
6 pretty good on that, but we couldn't do without one.
7 So, to lower it to the point where people would have
8 to then be parking on the street, and increasing the
9 competition as it were for street parking, would have
10 a serous adverse effect.

11 I guess I'll leave it there.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: All right. Thank
13 you.

14 Next, Mr. Davis.

15 MR. DAVIS: Hello. My name is Robert
16 Davis. I live at 719 Third Street, NE. That's less
17 than a half a block from the site.

18 I just want to -- it's late. I'll be
19 brief.

20 I took a home, I bought a home that was a
21 rental property by an absentee owner and I turned it
22 into my home because I believe in the future of the H
23 Street corridor. And I just wanted to come here
24 tonight to give Mr. Abdo support, if he needed it. I
25 don't think he does. I think he's set. But I want to

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1 thank him for believing in the future of the H Street
2 corridor and thank Mr. Esocoff. Thank Mr. Esocoff for
3 bringing grant architecture to the H Street corridor.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

5 Colleagues, any questions of this panel?

6 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I just have one
7 thing and that's for Mr. Layman.

8 You mentioned in your testimony that the
9 restoration work that's going to be done is to
10 Secretary of Interior standards for rehabilitating
11 historic structures.

12 I'm not sure that that's what the
13 Applicant is offering and I don't think that he would
14 be able to achieve his design for Convent, if that
15 criteria was established.

16 Are you aware of that?

17 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Turn your microphone
18 on before you answer. Thank you.

19 MR. LAYMAN: You're probably more right
20 than I am. I think that the --

21 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: It's not about
22 being right so much, it's about making sure --

23 MR. LAYMAN: Yes.

24 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: -- you have a
25 clear understanding of what's being --

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1 MR. LAYMAN: I didn't have as up to date
2 materials as you do before I wrote.

3 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Thank you.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

5 Cross examination, Ms. Prince? ANC?
6 Stanton Park?

7 Thank you. And thank you for being
8 patient.

9 I'm going to ask Mr. Patrick Lolly to come
10 forward.

11 Anyone else in -- any other person in
12 support that would like to testify, now is the time to
13 come forward.

14 This is the last call. Any other person
15 in support that would like to testify? Now is the
16 time to come forward. And we're going to begin with
17 Mr. Lolly and then the gentleman who just came
18 forward.

19 MR. LOLLY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and
20 the rest of the Commission.

21 I appreciate the opportunity to testify
22 before you this evening. And I hope that you don't
23 mind if I'm just very, very slightly redundant on some
24 of the important points that were made in this hearing
25 tonight.

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1 I live at 715 Third Street, NE, and I've
2 lived in my house for 19 years. And one of the main
3 reasons why I wanted to come and talk to you tonight
4 is because I want for the public record my almost
5 unbridled enthusiasm for the development of this
6 project.

7 For 19 years I've been waiting for this.
8 And during those 19 years I've watched the entire
9 north side of the 300 block of H Street destroyed for
10 what? For a gas station proposal. And it's very
11 fortuitous. It's kind of ironic that the last time I
12 was here for a hearing was when you all in your wisdom
13 limited and really defeated the extensive expansion
14 proposal of the gas station that was across the street
15 from what was in the Children's Museum. And it's an
16 important corollary because one of the reasons why
17 this panel defeated that extensive expansion was
18 because that expansion didn't reflect the highest and
19 best use for the land that was adjacent to the
20 Children's Museum. It didn't reflect the potential
21 for economic development in this area.

22 And see with this proposal we finally have
23 coming to fruition for the first time in the 19 years
24 that I've been across the street from this property,
25 an anchor that says, H Street is a place to invest.

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1 and that's really important to me. I don't own a
2 business on H Street, but God knows, I would love to
3 be able to shop on H Street and I never really ever
4 have been able to.

5 So, I want to make that point from the
6 beginning.

7 Just in terms of my written testimony,
8 I've submitted it for the record and I hope that you
9 accept some of the attachments to it. But, you have
10 to understand that my initial concerns on this project
11 regarding height and vehicular traffic and loading and
12 delivery zones, they've all been addressed. And one
13 of the reasons why they were addressed is because this
14 developer sought early on to make this an
15 extraordinarily inclusive process. I wish that I had
16 in the 20 years that I've been involved in land use
17 and development and particularly in historic
18 preservation, I wish that I could have such a
19 cooperative partnership with other projects.

20 I'd just like to make one concern known
21 that that Stanton Park alluded to earlier. I would
22 like to see as an amenity more attention paid to the
23 historic preservation component.

24 This property is actually very significant
25 in the District of Columbia and actually one of the

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1 attachments I've provided you is a little history that
2 I did with -- in conjunction with the Little Sisters
3 of the Poor and their library.

4 And, furthermore, in terms of this
5 building and bear with me for one second. I know that
6 we're pressed for time, but I included photographs.
7 Ironically enough from Marist Hall, which is across
8 the street from present Little Sisters of the Poor
9 Convent up at Hairwood Road. And interestingly in
10 late 19th century Catholic institutional architecture,
11 there was almost -- there was almost a paradigm for
12 it's development.

13 When the Children's Museum, when the
14 Little Sisters of the Poor developed its property in
15 1873 with the extensive help of Congress, I might add,
16 what they did they was acquire all of Square 752, so
17 that they could expand on it in the future. And
18 that's what you're really seeing.

19 When we talk about the historic fabric of
20 this building, what we're talking about is in one of
21 those last photographs I provided you of Marist Hall,
22 an original 1873 building that looked very much like
23 that photograph. A center section with a chapel and
24 two flanking wings.

25 In 1886, the Little Sisters got a

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1 subsequent appropriation from Congress. They built
2 the westerly wing of the building. And so the
3 historic fabric of this building is iterative. And I
4 just wanted to leave you and note for the public
5 record that it would be great as part of the historic
6 amenity if a qualified architectural historian could
7 do a really good assessment as to what constitutes the
8 original historic fabric of the building, leave it as
9 architectural historians do as, as we do with all of
10 our development projects that are certified historic
11 districts that are landmarks, really acknowledge the
12 way that the building developed architecturally with
13 its historic significance.

14 And, lastly, and thank you for the
15 additional minute, Mr. Chair, to make that record part
16 of the public inventory of the District of Columbia,
17 so that perhaps the historical society or the Martin
18 Luther King Library could actually use these data as
19 part of its historic record on the development of the
20 city.

21 Thank you.

22 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

23 You give us your name and identify
24 yourself. Just hold your seat.

25 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you. My name is Mike

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1 Sherman. I'm an ANC Commissioner on the 6C
2 Commission, 6C06. And let me say really briefly, I am
3 here tonight as a single ANC Commissioner representing
4 my members.

5 The Commission, as I'm sure you all have
6 seen, passed two unanimous resolutions. We sent two
7 letters to the Zoning Commission. I hope you have
8 both of those, expressing the unanimous support of the
9 Commission. So these remarks are representative of
10 myself and my constituents. And it's really the
11 thoughts of my constituents because I've been an ANC
12 Commissioner now since January 2nd and this is the
13 single most important issue of my constituents.

14 In fact, I'm going to go further than
15 that. This is the single most important development
16 in the H Street corridor in over 50 years.

17 And the impact of this project cannot be
18 understated and I'm glad that so many folks have
19 talked about tonight.

20 What I'm going to do very briefly right
21 now is just talk about the concerns that are important
22 to my constituents.

23 I think it was a great segway coming right
24 after you because I've had many constituents come up
25 and just express -- they are so frustrated that H

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1 Street seems to be some sort of barrier. And it's a
2 really sad thing to me as an ANC Commissioner to
3 thank of my Commission as having a barrier in it. And
4 I'm very sad about this and I don't want to exist by
5 the time my tenure is done. I think we need to bring
6 the community together. The folks that are moving in
7 new and the folks who have been there for along time.

8 And I think that this development on H
9 Street is truly going to spur a lot of activity, which
10 is going to H Street reflective of the diverse, multi-
11 ethnic, very diverse socio-economic group that lives
12 in our neighborhood. And think H Street can really
13 reflect our neighborhood much better.

14 The issues that are important and I don't
15 really need to go into them because everyone else has
16 is the historic preservation. People are very
17 impressed with the affordable housing component. And
18 what's so important about that is that it sets a great
19 precedent for future developments. And what it's
20 doing is it's carving out a niche as we develop new
21 areas, new projects in our neighborhood for the folks
22 who maybe are there who can't afford the \$400,000 to
23 \$450,000 condos which we see on the western half of
24 our ANC on Massachusetts Avenue.

25 I think this definitely meets the needs

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1 for housing in our community. We have a definite need
2 for increased housing in our ANC.

3 I'm a believer of smart growth. Many of
4 my residents are. Either you are or you aren't. And
5 this is right divisive issue. And it's been covered
6 on both sides. But this is perfectly situated if you
7 do believe in smart growth, to take advantage of the
8 two metros being so close.

9 So, with that in mind, folks are very
10 excited to see a high density building on the western
11 half of H Street, which can take advantage of its
12 proximity to Union Station.

13 And finally I have to mention the
14 substantial amount of community input between Mr.
15 Abdo himself and Toby Millman and the community.

16 In my short time on the ANC, there is
17 nothing more frustrating than speaking with an
18 architect or someone's son or cousin coming to present
19 an issue. Mr. Abdo has come himself to dozens of
20 meetings that I've been at, over half a dozen of them.

21 And I think that the proposal he's presented today is
22 truly reflective of my residence in 6C06 because many
23 of them, hundreds of them have given their input at
24 various meetings.

25 Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you, both.

2 Colleagues, any questions?

3 Okay. Cross examination, Ms. Prince?
4 ANC? Stanton Park?

5 Okay. Thank you.

6 MR. SHERMAN: The speed of my speech was
7 helpful tonight, wasn't it?

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you.

9 MR. SHERMAN: A lot of information, three
10 minutes.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you very much.

12 I only have one organization in opposition
13 and that is Residents and Property Owners of Square
14 776. So, whoever is going to represent them, if they
15 can come forward at this time.

16 And how many people do we have, persons in
17 opposition? Can you raise your hands so I can see how
18 many people.

19 Okay. So, we don't have any -- okay. So,
20 let me ask the residents and property owners of Square
21 776 who are in opposition. I'm going to ask both of
22 them to come to the table at this time. The one who
23 is going to speak for the residents and also the
24 person who is going to be the individual person who
25 gets three minutes. So, you both can come to the

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1 table.

2 Anyone else in opposition?

3 Okay, Ms. Schellin, if we can go to the
4 organization first and we'll give him five minutes and
5 then we'll give the next person three minutes.

6 Mr. McCrea, I believe?

7 MR. McCREA: Yes.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

9 MR. McCREA: Thank you, Chairman Hood and
10 fellow Commissioners.

11 My name is Mack McCrea. I represent the
12 residents of Square 776, which consists of a lot of
13 senior citizens who have lived in that Square since
14 World War II. They would have come out tonight, but
15 because of the weather, they couldn't make it. And
16 since the hearing went so long, I'm glad that they
17 didn't. So, on their behalf, I'll try to speak as
18 strongly as I can in terms of their position.

19 First of all, we would like to say that we
20 are disappointed that we weren't granted party status
21 since we are the neighbors that are directly across
22 from the Square. We are the neighbors that fought the
23 BP Amoco. We are the neighbors that will be most
24 affected by the project. But we certainly appreciate
25 you giving us the opportunity to state our position.

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1 And that position is, we are opposed to
2 the project as is constantly -- I mean as it's
3 currently presented and we listed in our letter the
4 reason why we opposed it.

5 Earlier we were solicited by the Office of
6 Planning to state our position on it and we submitted
7 something to them in that regard. Hopefully, they
8 added that in their report even though they appear to
9 be for the project.

10 Our main concern for that particular
11 project is the parking issue. The building is going
12 to have about 480 residents and the way we calculate
13 times two, probably because people are going to have
14 their spouses and let's face it, America loves cars.
15 And there simply is not going to be enough parking.

16 Parking in Washington, D.C. is becoming a
17 premium and we appear to be vastly moving this city
18 towards a situation like New York whereas in order to
19 have a parking space, you have to be a status
20 individual and that simply is not fair to us.

21 We feel the residents of this particular
22 development would have two options. They could park
23 on the development as well as park on the street. So,
24 where does that leave us? We're talking senior
25 citizens. We're talking people that's been there in

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1 their houses since World War II. It's simply not a
2 fair arrangement.

3 We are saying that some accommodations
4 need to be made for them.

5 Secondly, we feel the building height is
6 just simply too big. When you saw the picture that he
7 put up there, it clearly dwarfed the historical
8 structure, the Children's Museum. So, if we are
9 interested in actually seeing that, this building
10 totally dwarfs it, not to mention our two-story
11 houses.

12 If you saw the view from Third Street and
13 the suggestion that it would not cast a shadow, and
14 we're talking about a structure that's about 15
15 stories compared to two-story houses and you telling
16 me that it doesn't cast a shadow? I'm sure the
17 Commission wouldn't believe that.

18 And, thirdly, we strongly feel that adding
19 this many residents to this particular residential
20 square at this time is really not conducive to what
21 that original residential square was designed for.
22 Those squares on Capital Hill were not designed to
23 hold 500 residents. If that's the case, why don't we
24 let them build a big building on all the residential
25 squares? If that's the case, why don't we let them

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1 build a counter-building across the street right at
2 Third and -- the south side of Third and H Street.
3 Why don't we let them go up 15 stories if you're
4 talking about symmetry.

5 Also, we lose our skyline view, which we
6 feel is very important to us. We lose the effect of
7 seeing the western sunset. And that's simply not fair
8 to us. We feel the senior citizens in the senior
9 years of their lives should be entitled to see the
10 last look of the western sunset. And with this huge
11 building, it's simply not fair.

12 Now, as far as Mr. Abdo and his team, they
13 are honorable men. I'm quite sure. And they've done
14 great work in this city. But this hearing shouldn't
15 be about the virtues of Mr. Abdo. It should be about
16 this particular project and how it directly affects
17 the community. And out of all the people who
18 testified, we submit that our Square 776 would be most
19 directly affected by it. So, we would hope that the
20 Commission pay some close attention to that.

21 And, finally, we would like to thank
22 Commissioner Hildebrand who we felt asked some very
23 pointed questions to the applicant. And if you review
24 the transcript, in regards to height and in regards to
25 the parking, I'm not sure whether they sufficiently

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1 answered those questions.

2 I think Mr. Abdo would be a great
3 developer. I think this project can go forward, but
4 they need to cut it down. It's simply too big. We
5 might as well build a stadium there if we're going up
6 15 stories.

7 Thank you.

8 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Thank you. If you
9 can just hold your seat. You're going to have three
10 minutes.

11 MR. WINSTON: Okay. My name is Raymond
12 Winston. I live directly across the street from here.

13 I live at 831 Third Street. When I sit on my porch,
14 if they put this building up, I can't see anything.

15 My mom is 91. I have to have a car to
16 carry her back and forth to the hospital and
17 everywhere else.

18 If they should get this, there is no way
19 possible I'm going to have a parking spot to carry her
20 in and out. She has to go to the store. And this
21 entirely blocks.

22 There is a lady that's 96. My mom is 91.
23 And it's all elderly people and we have to have a
24 car. We have to have somewhere to park. If she
25 should decide to sit on the porch, which she's almost

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1 afraid, but we would like to be able to sit on the
2 porch and be able to see something at some time. And
3 it's totally unfair.

4 I thank you. That's all I have to say.

5 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I thank you
6 both for your comments.

7 Mr. McCrea, let me just say that while I
8 understand you're in Square 776, which is most
9 effecting, right across the street. We have some
10 regulations and I'm going to your first point about us
11 not making you party status.

12 We have some regulations for some specific
13 requirements and it was not timely filed, nor did you
14 express in our regulations 3022.3 of what should have
15 been in your letter for us to make our informed
16 decision on.

17 And let me just, so this won't happen
18 again in this manner. I would ask that next time or
19 even after this time, regardless of how the case goes,
20 pro or con, that you talk with -- or even Ms.
21 Schellin or Mr. Moyer, and look at regulation 3022.3.

22 While I understand where you're coming
23 from, but if we did not have a regulation in place,
24 you can imagine the trouble we would have. And the
25 way I look at -- it was stamped in on -- well, we got

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1 two dates. The 25th or the 26th, and I believe today
2 is the 27th. We have a requirement, so, we can have
3 adequate time to read and prepare and that did not
4 meet the requirement.

5 So, unfortunately, this time we didn't
6 know, but now we know. We'll work with the staff and
7 hopefully for the next venue or even this venue next
8 time, if there is a next time for you, that you will
9 be granted status because you have met the
10 requirements by law.

11 Any other questions, colleagues, of this
12 panel?

13 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I'd like to
14 thank you for coming down to speak because I think
15 it's always important to citizens to express your
16 views and to heard in a public forum. And I really
17 admire you both for coming down and talking on a very
18 difficult subject.

19 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Actually, I do
20 have a comment.

21 You know, I clearly hear the frustration
22 and the concern and I can see sort of, you know, just
23 physically what you're concern would be as it relates
24 to just looking out your front door and see this tall
25 building. But the one thing that I want to make

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1 certain that you keep in mind is that there are new
2 developments that are current in all of these
3 neighborhoods across the city. It's happening in my
4 neighborhood. It's happening in North Michigan Park
5 and across the city a number of existing residents are
6 having to deal with new development. Okay.

7 Now, I recognize you're dealing with the
8 height and you might not have an issue with depth.
9 There's new development. But I think one of the
10 things that we're going to have to get comfortable
11 with is that this city is trying to grow, you know,
12 and we are trying to make room for new residents.
13 We're also trying to retain affordable housing. And
14 we really need to look to those places where that can
15 be achieved.

16 And obviously we need to work on our land
17 use and manage this appropriately but a lot of these
18 neighborhoods, these small quite neighborhoods are
19 changing. And your speech, what you've said today, we
20 hear this constantly, so I just want you to know,
21 you're not the only person in the city that is sort of
22 dealing with these issues. These pressures are
23 happening across the city. I mean, I wake up to jack
24 hammers and all kind of things. But I'm just saying
25 that to you in that, you know, at some point, we're

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1 going to all have to figure out how we get comfortable
2 with growth and change in our neighborhoods. Okay.

3 MR. McCREA: Can I respond?

4 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Sure. Absolutely.

5 MR. McCREA: We welcome the development.
6 There is no questions, because we are one of the
7 starved neighborhoods that need the development after
8 the riots. But, as I look at Georgetown, which was a
9 historical neighborhood, you can have development and
10 still keep the character of the neighborhood. It can
11 be done.

12 I think we're setting a bad precedent when
13 we let these developers come in and put these huge
14 buildings here blocking the Washington, D.C. skyline.

15 It used to be a badge of courage when you
16 could fly into National airport and you could see the
17 various neighborhoods and stuff. Now, if we as
18 citizens sit up here and allow these developments to
19 build all these huge buildings and make us more like
20 New York, then shame on us.

21 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: and I guess what
22 I'm saying to you is that, you know, everyone does not
23 necessarily share that vision of how the District of
24 Columbia should grow. And, again, there needs to be
25 some level of respect.

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1 And I might also add to you that as it
2 relates to this whole notion of New York and how
3 making comparisons, sometimes height is not
4 necessarily a bad thing. And bulk is not necessarily
5 a bad thing. In many cases it does define
6 neighborhoods. It does create comfortable, sort of
7 barriers, so you understand sort of what a
8 neighborhood is. It's not always necessarily a bad
9 thing.

10 So, I hear your comments. I understand
11 where you're going. I just want to put that on the
12 record that, you know, the D.C. of old is changing and
13 it's hard to accept that. But it is and we need to
14 figure out how we can comfortably get there.

15 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me just add to
16 that because this discussion -- this is not our first
17 time having this discussion up here.

18 Mr. McCrea, you're absolutely right. We
19 have to find a balance. I hear the city is changing
20 and it is changing. But I'm also respecting and
21 reminded of those who have been here as you stated.

22 This is not the first time, as my
23 colleague stated and I probably had the same
24 conversation about another case just within the last
25 month.

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1 But it's going to be the Commission's job
2 to balance. And it might take out some views and what
3 not, but I'm also cognizant of those who have been
4 here. You named 91 and 90 years old. And those are
5 citizens who were on H Street when H Street wasn't in
6 its glory days. It's coming back. But then we have
7 to balance it and I look at the affordable housing as
8 I stated earlier. Regardless of the income we're
9 talking about what -- about \$40,000 or two people
10 making about \$30,000? And I look at that. You know,
11 so it's a balancing thing for us up here.

12 And I want you to understand I'm very
13 cognizant of anyone as I think we all are. I know the
14 city is changing, but we want to balance how we
15 proceed further.

16 Now, let me ask this and I may have missed
17 this. Did we see a view from Square 776 to the
18 project? Did we see that? A shadow diagram, Excuse
19 me. Okay. Did we ask for one? I think you did,
20 didn't you? Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: They gave a
22 shadow diagram, but they never gave us a perspective
23 looking from the east to the west of what you would
24 see from one of the townhouses across the street.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: That's what I would

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1 like to see. Is it here? If we have it, then that's
2 all I would like to see before we make our decision if
3 that's okay with everybody. Okay.

4 All right. And I really want to thank
5 everybody for their -- oh, no, no. I'm going to close
6 out and I haven't even finished.

7 The Applicant -- thank you, gentlemen.

8 Hold on. Cross examination? They said no
9 already, but Mr. prince, for the record, I'm going to
10 go through the line.

11 Ms. Prince? ANC? Stanton Park? Okay.
12 Thank you. Thank you, gentlemen.

13 Applicant come back.

14 MS. PRINCE: Thank you for your attention
15 this evening. It's late. Everyone is tired. I just
16 have two things to accomplish as a rebuttal point if
17 Phil Esocoff could address the issue of the view of
18 the building from the Third Street residences, I think
19 that would be helpful.

20 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Good.

21 MS. PRINCE: I have very brief closing
22 remarks and then we can all go home.

23 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Thank you.

24 MR. ESOCOFF: First of all, Jim do you
25 have that photograph?

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1 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I think is worth the
2 time.

3 MR. ESOCOFF: Yes.

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: This is important.

5 MR. ESOCOFF: Okay. I think this is an
6 important photograph because this is taken from across
7 those houses and that is the view right now. There
8 are no lights on at night. It's a blank brick wall
9 and I wouldn't consider that architecture of merit. I
10 think we can all agree on that at least.

11 But think the other --

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: That's the current
13 view.

14 MR. ESOCOFF: That's the current view from
15 those houses.

16 Now, the other thing I want to point out
17 thought and I think it's an important issues that we
18 come up with when we talk about height and obviously a
19 very different thing called scale.

20 This building is only three stores, but
21 it's completely out of scale with those townhouses
22 though it may in fact be shorter because scale is a
23 characteristic of understanding the actual size in
24 relationship to a human being.

25 So, when I look at this, I see a building

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1 that if it were five stories high -- five stories
2 higher would be out of scale. If it were one story
3 high, it would be out of scale. It wouldn't be in
4 scale with the community because it lacks scale. No
5 clue as to how big a thing is. And I won't go back to
6 classic architecture in scale but --

7 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: And actually that
8 was one of the concerns I had for your perspective
9 that was showing -- I didn't see a person in that
10 perspective to really address the whole notion of
11 scale.

12 And I understood the articulation --
13 Well, okay. I didn't see it.

14 MR. ESOCOFF: Well, let me just say.

15 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Okay.

16 MR. ESOCOFF: There's one other important
17 aspect of this is that I want you to notice that the
18 frame -- the cone of vision that you're seeing only
19 stops short of the top of that traffic light. So,
20 when we talk about what does someone say from across
21 the street, they don't see -- like this. Like a fly's
22 eye. They're going to see the lower portions of the
23 building. So, the challenge in making the building
24 good is in making the lower portions that cone of
25 vision that really is perceived correct. It has

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1 nothing to do with the overall height. Okay.

2 There was another view. I don't know --
3 we had with people in it. Oh, no. Next one. No.
4 There's another one. Did we -- that one.

5 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Oh, okay.

6 MR. ESOCOFF: Here you can see that what
7 we've done is try to create the arches and that
8 breakpoint where the bay is to kind of pick up on the
9 lines of the cornices across the way. That's why
10 we've attached little railings that you saw in the
11 closer one.

12 And because, you know, how this has
13 varying heights, obviously, we're trying to get the
14 proportion of those windows in ours by actually
15 doubling the size of the windows so that the width,
16 height, ration of that, that kind of diagonal thing is
17 more in keeping from this distance, you know. This is
18 one of those views where, in fact, now you're starting
19 to see the whole city. You're seeing the alignment of
20 the cornice of our building almost with the top of the
21 65-foot building because that's the way things are
22 perceived in the city. That's why we have one-to-one
23 set-backs for penthouses, because it's understood that
24 there's a certain perspectival phenomenon that occurs
25 that makes things fall into place at that angle

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1 because we do have a cone of vision of where it is as
2 well as forward. And that's why we worked so hard to
3 get those close-in shots, because we think when people
4 are sitting on their porches, they should look across
5 to flower boxes that are individualized by the people
6 who have those flower boxes. And plantings that are
7 in the little gardens that are in front of those
8 windows just the way they are across the street.
9 Because our residents also are expecting the people
10 across the street to be a pleasant view for them also
11 in the morning.

12 So, it's, you know. Seeing something with
13 its lights on, I think is nicer than that brick wall.

14 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: This was the
15 actual illustration where it thought it would have
16 been nice to show a person to really demonstrate
17 scale.

18 MR. ESOCOFF: Right.

19 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: But I understand
20 that you wanted to show across the street with -- yes.

21 MR. ESOCOFF: And those railings, for
22 instance, are like three feet high.

23 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: Yes. Yes. Right.

24 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I think there's
25 no question that the quality and character of the

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1 architecture that you're providing at the street scape
2 is by far superior in the side wall of the almost
3 warehouse like structure that's there now. But you
4 have to admit that there is a certain relief in having
5 that warehouse structure stop at 30 feet and being
6 able to see the sky across from you.

7 And I think if you were to do a comparable
8 view to the photograph that you've just shown of the
9 warehouse and did that smack on elevation of the side
10 of your building. Just do an elevation view of what
11 you see and then do the next cone of vision of what
12 you see, how many cones of visions would you have to
13 get before you saw the sky?

14 MR. ESOCOFF: I think you would turn your
15 head and look to the right or left. I think that we
16 go up and down Connecticut Avenue. I live on Kalorama
17 and Connecticut and the buildings behind me are two
18 stories. They stayed there. And my building is there
19 and the city is flooded with light. In Philadelphia
20 with 300 foot buildings, on 50 foot streets. This is
21 the most open, broad day lit city in the whole
22 country. And unless the 1910 Height Act is wrong, and
23 there's an alternative theory that we can talk about,
24 then somehow I think we're being misguided by that and
25 we should revise it. But I think we've got sufficient

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1 light and air in there in the city. In fact, in the
2 summer the city was planning to have trees canopy the
3 streets to provide shade. Now, if you go up 15th
4 Street today, we have plenty of light and air, but
5 it's blistering hot in the summer because we've taken
6 away the trees that were supposed to create that cone
7 of vision, create some shade.

8 So, I really just don't understand that
9 problem. New York has buildings that are a hundred
10 stories high. We're talking not about 15, of course,
11 but about 12.

12 COMMISSIONER JEFFRIES: So, let's say if
13 we took two stories off of this. Would it be a
14 different experience for the people that are living on
15 -- across the street? I mean if you took two stories
16 off. I mean, would it be a different living
17 experience, I mean? Would you come out and go, wow,
18 there's much more light now that we've taken two
19 stories off of this building? I just don't -- I don't
20 know where we're going here.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I guess --

22 MR. ESOCOFF: I'm very passionate about it
23 because I live -- you know, I look out my window at
24 all these great buildings at Kalorama and Connecticut
25 and I think that's my view. My God, look at those

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1 buildings. They are fantastic and then I see down the
2 street.

3 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: I guess the history
4 for me would be if the building -- the developer was
5 doing a matter of right, what effect would that have
6 on the homes across? And after that, then we move
7 forward.

8 MR. ESOCOFF: Well, it would be 65 feet
9 and the shadow size we showed, showed that in the
10 winter when the houses are not very much affected by
11 shade, it's the existing buildings throwing its shadow
12 extremely to the northeast. Our building actually is
13 shading further into the intersection. The notch we
14 cut into it almost cuts right around the two story
15 houses and we've submitted that.

16 And that's why the one-to-one setback is
17 good because you see it on Mass Avenue. There's a
18 whole zoning category of 110 and then 1 to 1 --

19 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Let me go back to the
20 site.

21 So, you're saying you've already provided
22 us something showing a matter of right from the view
23 from looking from the townhouse across to the project?

24 MR. ESOCOFF: Not straight across.

25 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay.

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1 MR. ESOCOFF: I mean --

2 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Yes. You know, I may
3 want to see that if you all can provided that for me,
4 Ms. Prince. I would like to see that. A matter of
5 right development from looking from the town homes
6 across. I just want to see as it was stated, is there
7 really any difference? You know a whole lot other
8 than what -- what is it 65 feet?

9 MS. PRINCE: 65 feet would be matter of
10 right. And we're happy to provide that for the
11 record. I think the shadow study rally already
12 investigates that exact condition.

13 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. So, I can
14 understand. That would be great. Okay.

15 Unless there's something else, colleagues,
16 ready to move?

17 COMMISSIONER PARSONS: Ms. Prince has --

18 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh, she hasn't? We
19 must be getting tired.

20 Ms. Prince.

21 MS. PRINCE: I have a very brief closing--

22 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Take your time.

23 MS. PRINCE: -- remarks.

24 As you've heard all night long, we are
25 passionate about this project. It has already been a

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1 catalyst on the H Street corridor. It's a gateway
2 project that make a transition. And the scale and
3 massing are appropriate because they have to be
4 considered in the context of the whole neighborhood,
5 but they also have to be considered in the context of
6 the entire square.

7 A large portion of this square will be
8 retained at its existing height and density with a 30-
9 foot buffer around it. The 110 foot portion of the
10 building we're talking about does not embrace the
11 entire square. We only have 65 percent lot occupancy
12 and that takes into account the historic building. It
13 makes the site transparent and it creates a wonderful
14 transition within the site itself.

15 We responded to the concerns about Third
16 Street by coming to you with the shadow studies. We
17 studied this exhaustively ourselves, with the Office
18 of Planning and now with you.

19 As Jim said, there is no perfect project.
20 There is no perfect PUD. But we think this one is as
21 close to perfect as we can provide to you. We have
22 tried to provide as much to as many as possible, not
23 only for this immediate neighborhood, but for the
24 entire city in promoting the housing objectives.

25 We have balanced every imaginable factor

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1 over the past several months in our community
2 outreach. And I think we have done an excellent job
3 of trying to balance all of the competing interest to
4 achieve what we need to achieve here to make this
5 project happen.

6 So, I strongly urge your favorable
7 consideration of this application. We're happy to
8 provide any follow-up materials. They are highly
9 limited. We would greatly appreciate your action on
10 this application at your next meeting in February.
11 And I appreciate your time and patience tonight.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Commissioner Parsons
13 is actually helping me with the shadow study and I
14 wanted to see -- for someone who doesn't have any
15 formal training in architecture, I would still like to
16 see the same view from across the street, just across
17 for matter of right. That will help me out a great
18 deal.

19 I don't know if anybody else --

20 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: Can I ask for
21 one thing too? And, again, it gets into the roof
22 scape.

23 The code reads that the spires, towers,
24 domes, pinnacles and vinerettes serving as
25 architectural embellishments, can exceed the matter of

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1 right height.

2 Can you give us some way in which the
3 proposed roof elements fit that description?

4 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. Do we all know
5 what's being asked for? Do we all know what's being
6 asked for? What we're asking for? Good. I'm glad
7 somebody knows because I don't.

8 So, what I'm going to do, I'm going to
9 ask, can we repeat that so we're all on the same page,
10 Ms. Prince? Can we repeat what we're asking for? So,
11 we're all on the same page. I don't think it's a
12 whole lot.

13 And we are going to shoot to try to take
14 this up at our February meeting, which has been moved
15 to the 24th of February. And that was moved prior to
16 this -- we did that at our last hearing.

17 Ms. Schellin, Mr. Moy --

18 MS. SCHELLIN: I have a couple of things
19 down. First of all, a copy of the roof plan as shown
20 on the PowerPoint presentation tonight. Yes. No
21 bigger than 11 x 17. A view from across the -- the
22 matter of right view from across the street. And then
23 Mr. Hildebrand -- I didn't catch the section, but he
24 wanted find out how the roof elements fit into the
25 description of Section --

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1 COMMISSIONER HILDEBRAND: I think it's 7 -
2 - 770.3.

3 MS. SCHELLIN: 770.3. And then also for
4 the ANC, in order for them to be given great weight,
5 they need to provide us a letter complying with
6 section 3012.5.

7 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: You can see staff and
8 they will guide you in that, ma'am.

9 Anyone else, anything else?

10 Okay. Thank you.

11 MS. SCHELLIN: Just the dates.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Oh. I'm going to
13 read those. I'm going to try to mix those in with my
14 closing statement. And if there's some questions,
15 I'll look up before I adjourn the hearing.

16 Ladies and gentlemen, the other members of
17 the Commission and I wish to thank you for your
18 testimony and assistance with this hearing. I want to
19 thank the residents as well as the Applicant as well
20 as all those who participated for their patience. And
21 while I'm thanking, I want to thank Ms. Schellin and
22 Mr. Moy for making sure that I do the cross
23 examination and keeping me straight and the Office of
24 Planning too.

25 When you don't do this often, sometime you

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1 forget and leave things out. I haven't done it in
2 awhile.

3 But anyway, the record in this case is
4 closed, except for the information that we have
5 requested, which was stated earlier.

6 Please note that all filings are to take
7 place no later than February the 8th. All documents
8 are due by 3:00 p.m. on February the 8th. Parties are
9 supposed to respond by 3:00 p.m. on February the 15th
10 with findings of facts and conclusions of law.

11 Any party in this case may file a written
12 response to any information or report filed after the
13 closing of the hearing. Such responses should be
14 filed no later than 3:00 p.m. as indicated by the
15 Secretary.

16 Parties in this case are invited to submit
17 proposed findings of facts and conclusions of law no
18 later than 3:00 p.m. which is going to be on February
19 the 15th, as previously indicated.

20 The Commission will make a decision in the
21 case at one of its regularly meetings following
22 closing of the record. We are expecting to hopefully
23 do it in February, which our meeting is going to be on
24 the 24th.

25 These meetings are held at 6:30 p.m. on

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1 the second Monday. In this case, as I mentioned, it
2 will be February 24, with some exceptions. That's the
3 exception.

4 And now over to the public. If any
5 individual is interested in following this case
6 further, please contact staff to determine whether
7 this case is on the agenda at a particular meeting.

8 Is everything in order, Ms. Schellin?

9 MS. SCHELLIN: Yes, sir.

10 VICE CHAIRMAN HOOD: Okay. I now declare
11 this hearing closed.

12 (Whereupon, the above hearing was
13 adjourned at 10:44 p.m.)
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